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Security Council

Seventieth year

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Wednesday, 18 March 2015, 10.35 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre/Mr. Bertoux	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Shearman
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2015/157)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2015/157)

The President *(spoke in French)*: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, Japan, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/157, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

I now give the floor to Ms. Honoré.

Ms. Honoré *(spoke in French)*: I would like to express my sincere gratitude to France, in its capacity as President of the Security Council, and to all Council members for organizing this meeting called to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission Stabilization in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2015/157), dated 4 March 2015. I also take this opportunity to welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Haiti.

(spoke in Spanish)

I would especially like to thank all the countries contributing troops and police elements to MINUSTAH, as well as all the Member States that have participated in the stabilization process, for their valuable support to the consolidation of peace and democracy in Haiti.

(spoke in English)

Since the Security Council's visit to Haiti from 23 to 25 January, the country has made measurable gains towards the holding of long-overdue elections by the end of 2015. Despite the uncertainty created by the absence of a functioning Parliament since 12 January 2015, the political consensus reached in the 11 January accord between the executive and a number of political parties has opened a path towards inclusive and transparent elections this year.

Following the establishment of a new Government and of a new provisional Electoral Council, provided for in the accord, the Council engaged in a series of consultations with political parties, the presidency and the remaining senators on the electoral law and the electoral calendar. On 2 March, President Martelly promulgated the electoral law, and after receiving a proposed electoral calendar from the Electoral Council, he followed through on 13 March by issuing a presidential order convening a first round of legislative elections on 9 August 2015, and a second round of legislative elections, combined with the first round presidential and the local elections, on 25 October. If required, a presidential run-off is to be held on 27 December.

With that, the prerequisites for the holding of elections this year have been established. Some political parties have voiced discontent over the electoral calendar. Nonetheless, most of them have signalled their intent to take part in the planned elections. I call on all political actors to continue a genuine dialogue and a transparent and consultative approach that contributes to building confidence among all stakeholders.

It is imperative that the Government provide the necessary resources for the Electoral Council to implement the ambitious calendar for what will be a highly complex electoral operation, in a timely and independent manner. That will allow, as provided for in the Constitution, for the fiftieth legislature to be installed on 11 January 2016, and for the transfer of power to a new President on 7 February.

In that context, I am encouraged by the provisional Electoral Council's swift resumption of its operational activities following the installation of the new counsellors on 23 January, including by reactivating

its technical commissions. When I was last before the Security Council (see S/PV.7262), on 11 September 2014, I spoke about the need for Haitian institutions to eventually assume full responsibility over the conduct of elections. It is time for Haitian authorities, including the Electoral Council, to demonstrate their capacity and assume even greater ownership of the electoral process. Within our means and capabilities, the Mission, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other partners, is supporting the relevant Haitian authorities.

That support notwithstanding, the continuing generous assistance of the international community is still indispensable, including with respect to filling the funding gap that is being ascertained by the Electoral Council and UNDP. Equally, international observation of the elections will be crucial to strengthening the confidence of political parties, candidates and voters in the process and to enhance transparency and fairness. I encourage all partners to contribute to election observation missions upon invitation by the Haitian Government.

Beyond the developments on the electoral front, the political situation has been marked by a rise in tensions between Haiti and its neighbour. The skilful handling of the situation by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the two countries led to a mutual reinforcement of their diplomatic ties with the full resumption of consular and embassy activities last Friday. I am encouraged that, as evidenced in the Jimani declaration of 13 March, the Foreign Ministers have undertaken to address the question of the status of persons of Haitian origin in the Dominican Republic. In that context, the United Nations country team and I have advocated for the resumption of a high-level dialogue between both countries to de-escalate tensions.

Over the past six months, the security situation in Haiti has remained relatively stable. As the Secretary-General's report outlines, however, we have witnessed a recent increase in certain crimes, gang-related violence and public unrest. Particularly troubling is a spike in violence between rival gangs in the fragile commune of Cité Soleil and other parts of the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince since the beginning of the year. The radical opposition has continued to criticize the recent political breakthrough and has not desisted from organizing anti-Government demonstrations, calling for the resignation of President Martelly and capitalizing on socioeconomic grievances, such as the recent general strikes over fuel prices and teachers' salaries.

As per the Secretary-General's report, most public protests have been small in size and have taken place without major incidents. Those that involved some degree of violence were for the most part handled by the Haitian National Police (HNP) without operational support from MINUSTAH. The Mission supported the National Police primarily by providing planning and technical advice for crowd control operations. However, in some case, formed police and the military were still called upon to actively engage in crowd control, together with the National Police, and crowd control by the military was mostly needed outside of Port-au-Prince. The Mission's police and military components further supported the National Police in addressing specific threats to security and safety in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince.

The further development of the Haitian National Police is vital for enduring stability in Haiti. In line with its commitment to the implementation of the Haitian National Police 2012-2016 development plan, the HNP has, with the support of the international community, achieved tangible results in the reconstruction of police infrastructure, recruitment, training, crime investigation, public order management and in the overall professionalization of police officers. Over the past year, the National Police has demonstrated significant improvements in operational readiness and in the performance of its crowd control units. Notwithstanding this progress towards the build-up of a professional and accountable police force and the important contributions made by bilateral partners, resources are still insufficient to achieve all the targets of the 2012-2016 development plan. The sustained commitment of the Haitian Government and the continuous generous assistance of the international community will remain critical, not only to enable the National Police to progressively assume full responsibility for internal security, but also to strengthen the management and administrative capacity and oversight mechanisms required.

Recent developments in the area of the rule of law are reassuring. Following years of consultations and repeated reviews, the presentation, on 13 March, of a draft penal code to the President of the Republic by the Commission for Judicial Reform brings Haiti one step closer to renewing its 179-year-old criminal law framework. The appointment of a highly regarded

judge as the new President of the Supreme Court and the Superior Council of the Judiciary and the launch by the Ministry of Justice of an initiative to expedite the processing of cases so as to decrease prolonged pretrial detention are also positive steps taken in early March towards addressing deficiencies in the rule of law and the continued challenges of overcrowding and detention conditions in Haitian prisons.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, while concerted efforts by national authorities and international partners have succeeded in drastically reducing the number of reported cholera cases — down from a peak of over 350,000 in 2011 to 27,753 reported cases in 2014, there was a spike in the last quarter of 2014. The newly appointed Government has set up an interministerial task force to coordinate response activities at the technical level. However, the lingering epidemic and high levels of other waterborne and vector-borne diseases will persist until gaps in infrastructure and services are definitively closed.

Haiti has continued to make progress on the relocation of persons displaced by the 2010 earthquake, with 79,397 persons still remaining in camps as of end 2014. Due to a drought in some areas of the country and a reduced production in crops in 2014, of an estimated 600,000 people suffering from severe food insecurity, the number of persons experiencing acute food insecurity in the country increased during the first three months of 2015, from 65,000 in 2014 to roughly 165,000. The United Nations country team's response entails a mix of instruments ranging from direct food aid and life-saving support for children suffering acute malnutrition to structural programmes aimed at improving access to social safety nets and income-generating activities.

In order to strengthen the continuum from recovery to development and to address remaining humanitarian shortcomings, the United Nations and partners, together with the Haitian Government, launched a transitional appeal in Port-au-Prince, on 11 March, and in Geneva, on 13 March, to replace the humanitarian action plan of 2014. The cost associated with the transitional appeal is $401 million, and I would like to encourage Haiti's partners and friends to consider making financial contributions.

With regard to the consolidation of the Mission, in accordance with resolution 2180 (2014), the military component has planned the reduction of its personnel from the authorized 5,021 to 2,370 troops. As Haiti enters a complex electoral period, and while the military component will reduce its presence, it is vital that the Mission's police component be fully staffed to support the Haitian National Police in all the departments during the electoral process and to enable the Mission's uniformed presence to be as effective, mobile and visible as possible. I therefore wish to invite all partners of Haiti to make an additional effort to assist us in reaching the authorized number of 2,601 police.

MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team have also initiated the transition planning to underpin the gradual reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in Haiti beyond 2016. To support that process, we aim at developing a transition plan that will draw on the consolidation benchmarks and the revised integrated strategic framework to ensure effective harmonization with existing planning frameworks. Close coordination and partnership with the Haitian Government will be critical as part of that process.

In conclusion, the continued good will of the Government and of all the political actors is essential to build confidence in the electoral process and create the necessary conditions for the upcoming elections to take place in as peaceful and serene an environment as possible.

(*spoke in French*)

It is in that context that I would like to welcome the Haitian political actors' acceptance of the principles of dialogue and compromise, which allowed them to embark upon the path towards holding the long-delayed elections in 2015. Holding a fair, transparent and inclusive electoral process in a peaceful climate is the sine qua non for Haiti to continue to make progress towards stabilization, democratic governance, the strengthening of the rule of law and socioeconomic development. I urge all political actors to do their part to ensure that these elections, which are so important, are held in an atmosphere of peace and trust, thus enabling the broadest possible participation.

(*spoke in English*)

I call on all members of the international community to continue to lend their support to Haiti's electoral process.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Honor for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré for her briefing and leadership. I also thank all the dedicated men and women serving in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), who are working with her to build a more secure and stable Haiti.

The United States welcomes the recent progress Haiti has made towards holding elections this year, including the promulgation of an electoral decree on 2 March 2015, drafted by a new Electoral Council, drawn from civil society, and that Council's subsequent announcement of voting dates.

While we commend President Martelly's efforts to promote an inclusive political process, including by forming a multi-party Government, the health of Haiti's democracy depends on restoring a functioning legislature without further delay. That is why it is so important that elections take place this year as planned, and that the Government continue to use its extraordinary decree powers solely to administer elections and keep the State running. We also call upon all of Haiti's political leaders and parties to participate in elections and to ensure an atmosphere of peace so that all eligible Haitians who wish to vote can do so without fear for their safety.

With the electoral decree in place and election dates set, urgent attention to preparing for and organizing the polls is required to ensure elections that are free, fair, credible and inclusive. Continued inclusive political dialogue and preparations for elections that are transparent and ensure a level playing field will be required to sustain the generally stable security situation that the Secretary-General has reported.

While MINUSTAH and the rest of the international community, including my Government, stand ready to support the administration of the elections, ultimately the responsibility for ensuring their success lies with Haitians: the Haitian Government, the Electoral Council, the political parties and the Haitian people themselves.

The level of support provided by MINUSTAH, particularly its engineering battalions, for elections in 2010 and 2011 were part of the package of extraordinary measures that the international community took to help Haiti recover from the devastating 2010 earthquake, not an enduring precedent for elections this year or in the future. We join the Secretary-General's call on the Government to ensure the Electoral Council and other States institutions have adequate resources to administer elections in a manner that reflects Haitians' increased assumption of a responsibility so central to the exercise of sovereignty. The United States will do our part in support of that.

Successful elections will require robust international support, of course, including from MINUSTAH. The Mission should, without delay, catalogue the functions played in the last elections by each of its respective components, including the funds and programmes. It should identify any of those critical functions that each component will not be able to carry out in 2015, and it should work urgently across the United Nations system and with the Electoral Council, donors, Haitian and international civil society actors and the Government of Haiti to ensure that those functions are carried out effectively during this year's elections.

MINUSTAH should also work closely with the Electoral Council to identify any elements of Haiti's election planning, including the number and location of polling centres, that may make the process more vulnerable to violence or manipulation and to develop and implement corrective measures transparently and in consultation with Haitian political actors. The 2015 elections will not be Haiti's last. It is important to use each electoral cycle to improve Haiti's electoral system and to make it more sustainable.

We note the generally stable security situation that the Secretary-General reported. That comes amid the continued growth and professionalization of the Haitian National Police (HNP), to which donors and MINUSTAH should continue to offer maximal support.

The Haitian National Police needs to continue to grow in size and capability. But while we were in Haiti, we heard that every trained Haitian National Policeman or Policewomen was worth 10 international police. Moreover, even with the reported increase in crime and gang-related violence, Haiti's homicide rate remains well below the regional average. Incidents of violent unrest during the reporting period totalled only 215 events. In most of those cases, the HNP required no operational support from any MINUSTAH forces to manage the situation, and in only 16 per cent of all incidents of violent unrest nationwide did the

HNP require some level of operational support for MINUSTAH's military forces. Most of those incidents took place in close proximity to the three locations where the military component will be based following MINUSTAH's reconfiguration. When support from the military component is required elsewhere in the country going forward, it will be available thanks to the mobility that the reconfigured Mission will have. The overall security situation in the six departments where MINUSTAH military no longer reside remained stable in the reporting period.

MINUSTAH continues to be an essential hedge against the risk of any future deterioration in security conditions, and the United States strongly supports a push by the United Nations, backed by Member States, to ensure the dispatch of an additional 300 international police forces to Haiti, as authorized but not yet deployed. We also support adding, without delay, medium-lift helicopters to MINUSTAH's aviation component, which will make the Mission's forces more quickly deployable in large numbers to any location in the country in the event of a different scale of unrest than we have seen thus far.

We also support the Secretary-General's call, echoed here today by the Special Representative, to ensure maximal visibility of MINUSTAH's forces, an objective well served by ensuring the Mission's leaders retain the flexibility to redistribute their forces as necessary to respond to evolving security conditions.

The year 2015 poses extraordinary challenges for Haiti, but also extraordinary opportunities: an opportunity to break from past electoral cycles marred by fraud and disenfranchisement and the violence that both have historically engendered; an opportunity for Haiti's political parties to put aside their differences and cooperate to ensure elections that place Haiti's democracy on sounder footing; an opportunity to adopt more sustainable elections architecture; and an opportunity for Haitians to take a giant step forward towards sustained political stability and self-sufficiency. As they seize those opportunities, the Government and the people of Haiti can continue to count on the utmost support of the United States.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I would like to start by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré for her briefing to the Council. I am glad to see her again after our visit to Haiti, and I take this opportunity to thank her for the hospitality afforded to the Security Council mission, as well as for her contribution to its success.

Despite the climate of relative political instability that still prevailed during our stay in Haiti, we are more confident about the recent political developments in the country. We therefore congratulate the Government and the opposition for being able, through dialogue, to overcome the then-prevailing political deadlock. Ms. Honore has just updated the Council on recent developments, confirming the improving climate in the country.

We especially congratulate the members of the recently established provisional Electoral Council for the expeditious manner in which it established, even if preliminarily, the dates for the general elections in July and October 2015, and January 2016.

We returned from Haiti with a very positive impression with regard to the important role played by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Mission has played that role since its deployment, in June 2004. We therefore support the decision in resolution 2180 (2014), as recommended by the Secretary-General, to extend the mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 October 2015. We are aware of the challenges and responsibilities undertaken by the Mission in order to respond appropriately to the country's realities. For instance, in the aftermath of the catastrophic earthquake and, more recently, with the cholera epidemic, MINUSTAH played, and continues to play, a determining humanitarian role in addition to the other duties provided for in its mandate, in particular in supporting the National Police in the management of public demonstrations and in guaranteeing security. There was a recent example of that during the political impasse in the country.

It is also encouraging to note the support provided by the military and police components of MINUSTAH to the National Police in response to security threats, particularly in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, where there has been, since the beginning of this year, an increase in criminality and violent clashes between gangs vying for territorial control.

In that connection, the configuration of the military and police components, set at 3,070 troops and 2,601 police, respectively, by resolution 2180 (2014), as well as their withdrawal from several areas of the country, have shown that the training and development of various national institutions, including those involved

in the enforcement of law and order, are having a positive impact. That has been further demonstrated by the strengthening of the operational capacity and the growth in the ranks of the Haitian National Police, which comprises almost 12,000 Haitians out of the established minimum of 15,000, and their deployment across the country.

That also demonstrates that, despite the many challenges ahead, including the upcoming electoral process, Haitians are on their way to assuming responsibility for managing their own destiny. It remains crucial, of course, that MINUSTAH remains until those challenges are fully addressed. The contingency planning to ensure security during the electoral process is further evidence of that reality.

On the economic front, we note with satisfaction that the United Nations country team has been implementing new initiatives within the framework of the four-pillar 2013-2016 integrated strategic framework aimed at rebuilding the country institutionally, territorially and socioeconomically. We commend the private investment initiatives in the border areas with the Dominican Republic through the high-level bilateral commission established for that purpose.

With regard to human rights and gender, we recognize the greater involvement of women, a number of whom we met during our visit, in the area of policing, as well as the involvement of women and civil society in the area of human rights. In that context, we encourage the Government of Haiti to diligently pursue the merit-based incorporation of more women in the Cabinet and posts of high responsibility, as is the case with the current transitional Government. The extension of the mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 October 2015 aims at strengthening law enforcement institutions and consolidating their operationalization, which is essential to the stabilization of the country and the core objective of the MINUSTAH mandate.

Angola has consistently supported political, socioeconomic and security initiatives in Haiti. We therefore reiterate our support for MINUSTAH in its pursuit of priority objectives as well as the implementation of reforms in key sectors in the country's life. We urge the maintenance of dialogue among the various political stakeholders as a contribution to lasting peace aimed at ensuring the restoration of a country that has gone through painful periods in the past decades.

Mrs. Kawar (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, may I join colleagues in thanking Ms. Sandra Honoré for her briefing. We are very pleased to see her here again.

The Security Council meets every six months to assess the situation in Haiti, a country that has seen instability and uncertainty with regard to its future. We must therefore conduct an in-depth assessment of the changing nature of the situation, so as to respond appropriately to the situation on the ground and in line with the needs of the Government and the people of Haiti.

I first would like to thank Chile and the United States, as well as the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), for organizing the Council's visit to Haiti in the beginning of this year. The visit proved invaluable in that it provided members of the Security Council with an opportunity to note the progress achieved in Haiti along with the challenges that the Haitian people must face in order to realize their aspirations.

We note the important work undertaken by MINUSTAH, as well as the significant initiatives to build the capacity of the National Police. We welcome the increase in the capacity of the Haitian National Police and call on the international community to ensure sufficient funding to promote police capacity on the administrative and planning fronts, as well as to ensure an increased presence, in particular in hard-to-reach regions.

We discussed with the Government a number of topics having to do with health, education and the economy, and it was clear that Haiti has made significant strides forward after the destructive earthquake that hit the country. However, more has to be done to deal with the difficult situation. One fourth of Haitian children suffer from hunger and only 35 per cent of the country's inhabitants have access to potable water, not to mention the still imminent threat of cholera as the summer approaches. We have noted the desire of civil society leaders to achieve stability and development, as well as the courageous efforts of women's organizations aimed at achieving greater justice and equality. We must support those efforts, as well as those aimed at revitalizing the economy and society.

We must work to create an inclusive and constructive environment that promotes political stability, democratic governance, development and guaranteed prosperity in Haiti. We welcome the efforts of President Martelly

aimed at preserving the continuity of the State and at strengthening the commitment of the opposition parties and their leaders to work together with the President in order to overcome the political crisis, in particular by strengthening the capacity of the legislative authorities to carry out their functions appropriately. We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her efforts to promote dialogue among the various national parties. On many occasions, we have emphasized the importance of holding legislative and presidential as well as local elections, following the 2015 time frame. We call upon all Haitian political parties to better engage in dialogue and cooperation in order to attain that objective. We reiterate the importance of a fair, transparent and comprehensive electoral process.

The Haitian Government faces formidable challenges on the security and logistical fronts in its efforts to enable the elections scheduled to be held. It is essential for the United Nations and the international community to remain in support of Haiti and to stand ready to provide assistance in various areas, including operational assistance through police services. The United Nations has succeeded, through various scenarios, in providing electoral assistance in local contexts, and Haiti should not be an exception. Efforts to promote the rule of law and the independent institutions tasked with those efforts are essential elements for realizing stability.

During the Security Council's visit, we saw that there was an urgent need for an increase in services in general, and particularly for legal assistance. On the matters of provisional and prolonged detention, overcrowding and the inhumane conditions in penal institutions, we call upon the Government to act. I must stress the situation of women in the prisons that the Council visited, where some women had been awaiting trial for as many as eight years. We do not know whether they are guilty or not. The situation in the prisons was extremely difficult and should be rectified as swiftly as possible. We call upon the Government to consolidate the major institutions for guaranteeing the rule of law and improving the capacity of the monitoring mechanism.

Finally, I would like to express our thanks to the United Nations peacekeepers working in Haiti for all their efforts and sacrifices.

Mr. Shearman (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her briefing today. The United Kingdom welcomes the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2015/157) and appreciates the valuable contribution that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has made to stability and progress in Haiti, as seen during the Council's visit in January. I will focus my statement today on three key points — the 2015 elections, the security situation and the future of MINUSTAH.

In January, the Council had the opportunity to see at first hand the contribution of MINUSTAH. It was also a chance to see the positive steps that Haiti is taking to ensure its own development and security. A further step is the recent confirmation that elections will be held this year. The failure to hold elections in 2014, together with the dissolution of Haiti's Parliament in January, led to uncertainty and insecurity among Haiti's people. We therefore welcome the formation of an Electoral Council, the publication of the electoral decree and the announcement of an electoral calendar. We commend the efforts of President Martelly and the political parties in finding the consensus needed to agree to that. As the Secretary-General acknowledges, there will be more challenges to the electoral process ahead, but that is a positive step. We call on all actors to play an active role in preparations to ensure the integrity and credibility of the elections.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General reports that the security situation remains generally stable, including in the parts of the country where MINUSTAH is no longer present. The development and reach of the justice sector, including through corrections institutions, will support stability and will ensure that the rule of law is justly applied in Haiti. As the Secretary-General reports, that has been undermined by the recent prison escapes and the resulting criminality. However, we commend the response of the Haitian National Police, which led to the recapture of the escapees, including through collaboration with law enforcement agencies in the Dominican Republic. The report also highlights improvements in the rule of law, which are to be applauded, although there is clearly more to be done to end impunity and ensure accountability and transparency.

The role of MINUSTAH is to help Haiti re-assume responsibility for its security. While MINUSTAH undoubtedly still has a stabilization role to play in Haiti, we are encouraged to read in the Secretary-General's report of the increasing capacity and professionalism

of the Haitian National Police. That is illustrated by the way in which they have dealt with the recent political demonstrations, mostly without the need for overt operational support from the military element of MINUSTAH. We recognize that Haiti faces challenges in 2015, including the elections, a weak economy and tensions across its border with the Dominican Republic. But we believe that a leaner, more flexible MINUSTAH, working in support of a growing and more professional Haitian national police force, will be able to maintain stability and counter any threats to security. Our support for the drawdown of some of the military elements of MINUSTAH is evidence of our confidence in the Haitian National Police and in a leaner MINUSTAH force to ensure stability while elections take place.

We are encouraged by the work already done by MINUSTAH alongside the United Nations country team to reconfigure and consolidate their resources. We particularly welcome the decision to develop, with the Government of Haiti, a road map to guide the transitional functions from the Mission to other actors. We look forward to receiving an update on that process in the Secretary-General's next report. Together with political progress, we see development rather than peacekeeping actors as the key to securing Haiti's future, and we hope that Member States will support the United Nations country team and the Government of Haiti in their efforts to find the right people and resources for the crucial work.

Haiti faces a difficult period, not the least as a result of economic pressures and tensions with its neighbour. Despite some progress, Haiti still faces challenges. However, we are confident that, with the right level of support, Haiti will continue to progress in taking increasing responsibility for its own security and development. Maintaining the reform of the justice sector, the police and the corrections facilities and ensuring that the elections take place will be vital to building stability and safeguarding Haiti's future.

Mrs. Adnin (Malaysia): Malaysia joins other Council members in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandara Honore, for her briefing, which we have listened to with much interest. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2015/157) on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), submitted pursuant to resolution 2180 (2014).

Malaysia notes that the political and security situation in Haiti remains fragile, owing in large part to the expectations and anticipation among the people that the long-delayed legislative, municipal and local elections will be held. We note that, since the 49 legislators' mandate ended on 12 January, a key element of the country's political and institutional framework that can check and balance executive power has been rendered ineffective. We remain concerned that continued political uncertainty could lead to possible deterioration in the security situation in the country. It is imperative for the Government to address the people's grievances and allay their fears, including concerns about the economy and unpaid salaries. In the light of the recent economic growth currently being experienced, Malaysia believes that the Government is in a position to address such concerns.

Since the Council's recent visit to Haiti, in January, the Government has taken what Malaysia views as a number of gradual and important steps towards paving the way for the elections to be held later this year. We are encouraged by the steps taken so far, including the establishment of a transitional Government and the installation of a new provisional Electoral Council, the promulgation and subsequent enactment of a new electoral law, and the Government's recently proposed election calendar, among other things. We believe that those and other steps taken to date demonstrate the Government's commitment to ensuring that free, inclusive and transparent elections can take place this year. Malaysia joins other Security Council members in urging Haiti's political actors to work together constructively to ensure that the elections take place according to schedule.

We note that due to various factors, including a series of natural disasters, coupled with a long period of political impasse and related violence, the humanitarian and human rights situation in Haiti remains precarious. Nevertheless, we remain optimistic and are encouraged by the resilience of the Haitian people in their efforts to overcome such challenges. We encourage the Government to consider further improving respect in the country for human rights, including women and children's rights and the right to health care and education, and to take the necessary steps to establish accountability where there has been impunity, including for human-rights violations committed in the past. We stress that such processes should be Haitian-owned and -led. On a related note, we are encouraged

by steps that have been taken, including those aimed at eliminating the still present cholera epidemic, and the ongoing efforts to resettle, relocate and integrate internally displaced persons and to include women in the political process and development of the five-year national strategy for child protection, among other things.

With regard to the security situation, Malaysia notes that the safety and security situation remains stable overall. The Government should nonetheless continue to focus its responses, particularly in addressing violent crime, including murder, rape, gang violence and abductions, among other things. We note and commend the continued support of the police and military components of MINUSTAH to the Haitian National Police (HNP), including through the provision of technical advice and operational support for crowd-control operations and incidents of violent public unrest in Haiti. We are encouraged by the fact that the HNP appears increasingly capable of managing such situations on its own. We further note and support the Government's proposed plan to build and improve the HNP's capacities and capabilities. We believe that efforts designed to increase its competency and professionalism will go a long way to building public confidence in such a key national institutions.

In addition, the Government's ongoing efforts to cooperate with MINUSTAH and other partners and stakeholders to strengthen the legal and judicial frameworks are positive and noteworthy steps towards strengthening the rule of law in Haiti. In the light of the upcoming elections, Malaysia is of the view that MINUSTAH's possible reconfiguration should take into account the need to retain a rapid-response capability, among other things. In that regard, we note the ongoing consultations within the framework of the joint United Nations-Government steering committee. We would also like to emphasize that such discussion should be geared towards facilitating Haiti's transition and future development. On the issue of MINUSTAH's consolidation, Malaysia notes the progress that has been achieved in areas that fall under the four stabilization benchmarks — police development, electoral capacity-building, the rule of law and human rights, and key governance issues — and we look forward to further updates.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again express Malaysia's appreciation for MINUSTAH and reaffirm our support to its mandate, its leadership and the entire Mission team for their sustained and exemplary contributions in support of the Government of Haiti, particularly as it steps up to meet its responsibilities for the maintenance of stability and security in the country.

In conclusion, Malaysia believes that 2015 will present Haiti and Haitians with enormous opportunities for fulfilling their aspirations. Working alongside Council members, MINUSTAH and the wider United Nations family, institutional donors and other partners and stakeholders, Malaysia will continue to support the ongoing transition and nation-building processes currently under way in Haiti aimed at achieving its goals for stability, security and development.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to thank Ms. Sandra Honoré for her briefing and her work as Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and of course to welcome our good friend Ambassador Denis Regis of Haiti.

I would like to subscribe fully to the statement to be delivered later by the observer of the European Union, while adding some remarks in my national capacity.

Spain shares the Secretary-General's vision when he identifies hopeful signs, such as the drop in the numbers of displaced persons and cholera cases. However, at the same time we agree with his description of the situation as very worrying and his emphasis on the significant challenges facing the authorities in the election processes scheduled for this year and announced by the provisional Electoral Council. Indeed, in the political area the challenges are major, since when the planned elections are concluded and a new President takes over on 7 February 2016, it will be only the third time that presidential power in Haiti has been transferred through the holding of elections, and the first democratic elections since 1989. That is an achievement that must be preserved. Spain would like to support Haiti on its road to consolidating its democratic institutions, and urges all the country's political actors to be generous and determined in helping to establish and maintain a politically and socially stable atmosphere that will enable the various electoral processes to be conducted successfully.

I have heard President Martelly say in person more than once that the old ways of conducting politics in the country must end. The political classes must act not to defend their personal privileges and ambitions but to promote the collective interests of the country

and, above all, of its citizens, who are beginning to be profoundly disappointed in their political institutions. To act as they have done in the past, with a limited, short-term vision, would betray the future prosperity that we, the friends of Haiti, desire as much as the Haitians do themselves, and would squander the enormous efforts that the international community has made to help them to normalize their political life and achieve sustainable development. We hope that the Haitian political classes will stay on top of the situation during this crucial year.

We continue to call for dialogue between the political stakeholders as the best way to build democracy and improve the country's political consolidation. In that regard, I would emphasize the efforts undertaken by various missions of the Club of Madrid, which were financed by the European Union and aimed at promoting the dialogue in the discussions on political reform.

In the area of development, Council members are well aware of the firm and generous solidarity of Spain and the Spanish people with Haiti. From 2010 to 2013, we were the third largest bilateral donor in the world and the largest in the European Union. Spain has allocated more than €250 million to the reconstruction work in Haiti and today is providing essential cooperation in such sectors as water and sanitation in the amount of more than $150 million, for the benefit of 2 million beneficiaries, and is contributing €15.5 million in direct budgetary support to the education sector. In short, of all the countries in the world, Haiti is at present the main recipient of official development assistance from Spain.

In the area of security, it has been confirmed that the situation has undergone major changes since the decision to reconfigure MINUSTAH was adopted, in October 2014. Such an assertion is justified, for example, in the publication of an electoral timetable by the provisional Electoral Council. However, Spain believes that instability has significantly increased in the streets and there have been changes in the security situation. According to the figures provided by MINUSTAH, during 2014 there were 838 protests, of which a quarter were violent. Furthermore, the tension on the streets has acutely increased in recent months.

Since the publication of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157), there have been some major strikes, including a general strike lasting two days, on 9 and 10 March, as well as demonstrations that degenerated into serious incidents, such as the invasion of the Consulate of the Dominican Republic in Port-au-Prince. There has also been a significant increase in the number of assaults and robberies, in offices and headquarters of religious orders and non-governmental organizations.

Spain wishes to draw attention to those facts, which constitute a substantive modification of the security situation that existed a few months ago, reflect the existence of a very delicate balance and ultimately foreshadow the difficulties that will have to met as the political activity linked to the elections intensifies.

Let us talk about MINUSTAH itself. Spain has always maintained in its statements to the Security Council that the reconfiguration of the military contingent should take into account the increase in the number of personnel and the capacity of the Haitian National Police forces to arrive at Haiti assuming the functions of maintenance of public order currently undertaken by the United Nations Mission. However, from the information available and the facts to which I referred earlier, I can deduce that the forces of Haitian law enforcement lack even the tools necessary to controlling the situation by themselves and in fact rely regularly on the logistical arrangements and military infrastructure of MINUSTAH to do their jobs effectively.

Spain considers that if the security conditions have not drastically worsened despite the seriousness of the facts, it is precisely because of the presence of the work of MINUSTAH. At this point, I wish to mention the letter sent by President Martelly last 9 March to the Secretary-General in which he noted the importance of the security environment for the proper conduct of the electoral process, calling attention to the disturbing increase in violence. In this letter, the President of Haiti requested "that the United Nations observe a pause in the ongoing withdrawal process of MINUSTAH contingents." Spain supports responding positively to that request of the highest authority in Haiti.

As members of the Council know, we supported from the beginning the process of reflection on the future of MINUSTAH. We continue to support the Mission reconfiguration plan, which should take into account progress in the formation and consolidation of the National Police and its ability to progressively assume the functions that MINUSTAH will give up in the field of security. In the current circumstances, Spain insists

that the Mission reconfiguration calendar be studied in a flexible manner, on the basis of analyses and forecasts in the short and medium term and of the evolution of the political and security situation. We believe that the role of MINUSTAH is and will be essential for the electoral process to take place normally, in security and transparency, and for the international community to support that process and the establishment of a new Administration, ensuring a peaceful political transition that consolidates the achievements of the past few years in terms of democracy and rule of law. In any case, the risks cited by the Secretary-General in his report serve to highlight the need to maintain a rapid reaction force in addition to the police component, which should, in our view, be maintained at current levels until the establishment of the new Government.

I conclude by reiterating our total commitment to Haiti once again.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): I also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré for her briefing.

Nigeria commends the transitional Government in Haiti for the significant progress made in overcoming the political impasse that had affected its parliamentary responsibilities. The promulgation of the electoral law on 2 March demonstrates the firm commitment of the Haitian authorities to democracy and good governance. We urge the Government to sustain that political momentum in good faith in order to foster the necessary consensus for elections to be held as scheduled. To complement those gains, it is vital that the Electoral Council remain impartial, independent and transparent. Those attributes will be essential in building trust and confidence in the political process. They will also be vital to the holding of free and fair elections later this year.

It is essential to strengthen security and the rule of law in Haiti. To that end, we recognize ongoing efforts to strengthen and professionalize the Haitian National Police (HNP) and other security structures in the country, which will enable them to meet emerging challenges. We note the continued increase in the personnel strength of the HNP, which has placed it on a trajectory to attain its target of 15,000 officers by 2016. From a gender perspective, it is significant that 1,022 of the 11,900 police officers in Haiti be women. We commend MINUSTAH for its close cooperation with the HNP in addressing threats to security and safety.

It is imperative that programmes that promote socioeconomic alternatives to violence be pursued vigorously in order to tackle internal security concerns. In that regard, we take note of MINUSTAH's initiatives and welcome the 25 new projects for youth and vulnerable communities approved for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. The launch of 56 new quick-impact projects designed to strengthen State authority, address environmental protection issues and enhance the rule of law is a welcome initiative that will significantly boost the reconstruction process.

The situation in Haiti is stabilizing and the country is on a path to a peaceful, secure and prosperous future. The current transition plan provides a feasible and prudent way forward. The role of MINUSTAH will remain vital as the Haitian authorities take on more responsibilities during the drawdown phase. International support will also be crucial, and we urge donors and development partners to maintain and indeed strengthen their engagement with Haiti.

We pay tribute to Special Representative Honoré and the men and women of MINUSTAH for their commitment to attaining the Mission's mandate.

Ms. Schwalger (New Zealand): At the time of its most recent renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the Security Council emphasized two points: first, that any reconfiguration of the Mission should be guided by facts on the ground; and, secondly, that the Security Council should act at any time to adjust MINUSTAH's mandate if compelled by a change of conditions in Haiti (see S/PV.7262). Both rely on the Council receiving information that enables it to monitor continuously the situation on the ground. We welcome the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2015/157) and the briefing from Special Representative Honoré, both of which build on the information gathered during the Council's visit to Haiti earlier this year.

MINUSTAH must be fit for purpose. As the situation on the ground evolves, the Mission must adjust accordingly. We must ensure clarity of purpose and have the resolve to consolidate the Mission as and when the Haitian authorities are ready to assume responsibility for Haiti's security. But, as the Council contemplated last year, any reconfiguration of MINUSTAH must be based on a rigorous assessment of the needs on the ground. In that regard, and based on its assessment, particularly from the January visit, we

must say that New Zealand is apprehensive about the planned — and already committed — drawdown in the Mission's military component.

That military component presently provides a back-up if the national police force is unable to address security concerns, even with the assistance of the MINUSTAH police component. Until the number and capacity of local police is increased, the ability of the Haitian Government and MINUSTAH to ensure the safety and security of the Haitian people may be tested. That is particularly so with respect to the electoral period scheduled to last for several months later this year. The Security Council must remain open minded, flexible and ready to respond, if necessary, to changes in the security environment.

We must also be responsive to the views of countries on the Council's agenda. To that end, we acknowledge President Martelly's letter to the Secretary-General including, among other things, a request for a pause in the recognition of MINUSTAH. We will reflect further on the letter but do wish today to register that we are encouraged by the progress made in strengthening domestic institutions in Haiti, in particular the Haitian National Police (HNP). We look forward to a time when the HNP can assume full responsibility for security and stability in Haiti. But there is much work still to be done.

As acknowledged in the Secretary-General's report, the HNP requires more officers and further training. Given the ongoing challenges to law and order and the urgent need to continue developing the HNP's capacity, it is imperative that the full complement of MINUSTAH's police personnel envisaged in the Mission mandate be deployed as soon as possible. This is a priority, particularly given the imminent reduction in MINUSTAH troop numbers.

MINUSTAH will not be in Haiti forever. Haiti must increasingly assume responsibility for its own security and stability. An inclusive and representative democracy is a precondition to achieving that goal. It is therefore critical that Haiti should hold free and fair elections and restore a functioning legislature. As noted by other Council members, all of Haiti's political actors must do everything possible to ensure that those elections take place promptly, in stable conditions and without violence. Everything must be done to avoid further delays in the electoral process. We urge the international community to stand ready to support that electoral process.

Without a well-managed transition process, MINUSTAH's achievements risk coming undone. We commend the transition planning already under way and urge that it continue in a spirit of genuine partnership between MINUSTAH and the Haitian Government. The needs of Haiti must be well understood, as they inevitably change during the transition. Flexibility will be required to ensure that that the people of Haiti can develop their country in accordance with their own priorities and, ultimately, that they have full ownership of their destiny.

Mr. Baublys (Lithuania) *(spoke in French)*: We express our gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, and her team as well as to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for its work, which has made an extraordinary contribution to peace and stability in Haiti. The important progress made since since the earthquake inspires hope. We sincerely hope that the Haitian Government will soon be able to resume full control and that the United Nations can take on a different role.

(spoke in English)

Lithuania aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union. For my part, I would like to address three key issues: inclusive elections, the rule of law and institution-building.

In February, five years on from the earthquake, the Council paid a visit to a country that continues to consolidate gains in stability and democracy. Few people today are without shelter, water or access to social services. More children go to school. Significant steps have been taken to improve governance and strengthen the rule of law. The launching of the Haiti transitional appeal for 2015-2016, aimed at addressing social and economic inequalities, will hopefully lead to further normalization.

An inclusive and transparent political process is a prerequisite for sustainable peace and stability on the island. We welcome the appointment of the provisional Electoral Council and the decision, albeit a late one, to hold elections this year. We appreciate the strong commitment by President Martelly to ensure that the elections are credible, independent, transparent and inclusive. It is essential to stick to the proposed electoral

calendar and for all the stakeholders, including the opposition, to overcome their differences. The future of Haiti depends on the inclusivity of the electoral process.

When the Council met in Port-au-Prince with at the newly appointed ministers, we were inspired by their ambitious plans and their appreciation of the immense challenges ahead. Among the challenges, pre-eminent remains that of strengthening the rule of law, which is at the core of further progress in unlocking the country's economic and social potential.

Strengthening of the Superior Council of the Judiciary, including the certification of judges, has been one of the steps towards the much-needed reform of the judicial system. The independence of the judiciary should be further strengthened. More needs to be done, including to address pre-trial detention, overcrowded corrections institutions and the protection of human rights.

There is a need to further improve the operational capacity of the Office of the Ombudsman. The engagement of stakeholders on human rights reporting is a welcome step. Human rights must be the focus of the new Government. Accountability for human rights abuses must be ensured. We encourage Haiti to continue reviewing the penal code in order to adequately address gender-based violence.

In April, the Haiti National Police (HNP) will be over 13,000 strong. It will be less dependent on MINUSTAH, with greater authority and more confidence. The capacity and performance of the HNP has improved significantly. We look forward to increased police deployment outside the Port-au-Prince metropolis and continued efforts to increase accountability and build trust with the population. Strengthening of the Inspectorate General, the vetting of police officers, and community outreach programmes are welcome steps in that regard. Increased capacity of the Haitian National Police and making full use of the level of MINUSTAH troops, as authorized by resolution 2180 (2014), should enable the Haitian authorities to maintain law and order during the upcoming elections.

As armed violence continues to plague the country, the MINUSTAH community violence reduction programme has been key to dismantling criminal gangs and allowing development actors to reach what were previously "no go" areas. Offering economic alternatives is an essential element of preventing gang recruitment. At the same time, the United Nations and Haiti's Government need to focus on addressing the proliferation and smuggling of small arms and countering drug trafficking.

The upcoming elections, stronger rule of law institutions and a committed Government portend a new chapter in the history of Haiti. The United Nations will continue to render indispensable support during this crucial year. But Haiti must assume responsibility for its own stability. The consolidation of the MINUSTAH mandate and its forthcoming reconfiguration, including enhancing quick-reaction capabilities, should aim at enabling the United Nations to continue assisting the Haitian people in targeted areas. International efforts should now focus on addressing social, economic and, increasingly, developmental issues. The States of the region should play a more vocal role. The European Union, as one of the largest donors, will continue to support institutional reforms, enhance the State's financial capacity and promote tax reform, among other goals.

In conclusion, let me again express our gratitude to the Special Representative, MINUSTAH troop- and police-contributing countries and the United Nations country office in Haiti.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's debate. I also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré for her briefing. So far this year, Haiti's political process has registered positive progress. Haiti has formed a new Government and established the provisional Electoral Council. It has announced the election calendar and thereby officially initiated the formal election preparations. Haiti's overall security situation has remained stable, with a gradual restoration of economic development, which has led to conditions favourable for accelerating the advancement of the country's political process.

On the other hand, it should also be noted that the country's political situation remains complex and fragile. Cholera prevention, appropriate settlement of internally displaced persons and other humanitarian aid tasks continue to face challenges, and peace rebuilding remains arduous and has a long way to go.

In January the Security Council carried out a successful visit to Haiti, where it engaged extensively with the country's leaders and various stakeholders, thus demonstrating the great importance it attaches to the question of Haiti, as well as determination to find

a solution. Currently, there is an important opportunity in Haiti's peace process. It is China's hope that the international community will offer support mainly in the following three areas.

First, it is neces to advance steadfastly in the electoral process. The prompt and smooth completion of the relevant elections is critical to achieving sustainable peace, stability and development in the country. China hopes that the Haitian parties will focus on the country's future and its people's well-being, seize the opportunity, meet each other half way ,nd work together to create favourable conditions for the holding of the elections. The internationa! community and concerned regional organizations, based on respect for the country's ownership, can actively play a monitoring and coordinating role and provide support for the elections.

Secondly, it is important to concentrate efforts on accelerated national development, given that underdevelopment is one of the root causes triggering the country's political and social problems. The country's current external environment has been stable. Positive achievements registered during the post-earthquake reconstruction prepared a good foundation for accelerated development. The Government should promptly establish a development strategy adapted to its own national context, strengthen infrastructure development, and enhance its capacities in disease prevention and disaster reduction and promote comprehensive economic and social development. The international community should effectively honour its aid pledges to Haiti, actively engage in Haiti's State-building, and assist Haiti in attaining its goals of reduced poverty and self-led development as soon as possible.

Thirdly, it is necessary to adjust the peacekeeping deployment in an orderly manner. Under the leadership of Ms. Honoré, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has played an important role in such areas as supporting the political process and maintaining social order and security, which China welcomes. We hope that MINUSTAH, in starting its gradual downsizing, will take situation on the ground into account and implement this work steadily and surely, while strengthening communication with the Government. We also hope that MINUSTAH will continue strengthening the training of the Haitian National Police with a view to their early assumption of comprehensive responsibility for national security.

Mr. Mangaral (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), for her briefing. I also congratulate and thank the representatives of Chile and the United States of America for their efforts in leading the Security Council's visit to Haiti in January, which allowed us to have a direct look at the situation on the ground. I welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Haiti at this meeting.

Chad notes with satisfaction that Haiti's political situation is progressively and rapidly reconfiguring. After a long period of political tension and a relative institutional vacuum, intensive consultations and the restoration of trust between the President and the opposition parties have led to consensus and renewed institutional activities. In that regard, the nomination, on 25 December 2014, of a new Prime Minister, the signing of a tripartite agreement among the heads of the three branches of power, as well as the signing, on 11 January, of a political accord among 16 political parties, the constitutional amendment on extending the terms of the parliamentarians, the establishment of the provisional Electoral Council and the electoral calendar for the forthcoming municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections between July and December, all demonstrate the remarkable achievements made in only four months.

Chad welcomes and encourages all actors and thanks them for their good offices, as well as the facilitators and mediators for their tireless efforts to stabilize and thereby normalize the political situation in Haiti.

We welcome the Haitian Government's significant participation and investment of $13.5 million in preparations for the elections, which will be decisive in reinstating democracy. We therefore encourage partners and the international community to scale up efforts in providing the technical, logistical and financial support necessary to ensure transparency and credibility in the long-awaited free and democratic elections.

Moreover, we believe that the normalization of the political situation will allow political, economic and social stakeholders to concentrate on the major social and economic challenges facing the country. Poverty, the earthquake and other natural disasters have left

deep scars, thus requiring consistent efforts to relaunch the country's economy.

About 3 million people suffer food insecurity, while 600,000 others, including 100,000 children under-five years of age, are severely impacted. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157) also notes that at the end of December 2014, about 80,000 internally displaced persons remained in 105 camps across the country. We therefore call upon the national authorities, humanitarian agencies and the international community to find sustainable solutions to relocating and reintegrating those vulnerable people.

With respect to public health, the report notes a substantial increase in 2015 of cholera cases. Chad encourages the national authorities and specialized agencies to develop and implement strategies, particularly in the area of public health, to help families and the impacted communities.

We take due note of the fact that United Nations agencies have made progress in the financing of more than 80 projects in the areas of economic integration and human rights. We also call on the Government to scale up its efforts to bring about economic and social stability for the people in need.

Regarding human rights, we are concerned about the situation of those in prison, in particular women. We welcome the steps taken and the technical support provided in the drafting of the penal code. Nevertheless, as we await an appropriate solution to the problem of prison overpopulation, we would encourage MINUSTAH to continue to support the improvement of detention-centre infrastructure, with respect for the rights of women ensured through the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

On the security front, Chad notes that the situation remains relatively stable, although the street protests organized by opposition parties that did not sign the agreement, as well as those against the increase in petrol prices, exacerbate anti-Government sentiment. Public order is also threatened by crime, including killings and kidnappings perpetrated by gangs and criminal groups. Other public issues include road blockades, the destruction of property and attacks against police officers.

Given this situation, we are pleased with the ongoing improvement in the response and capacity of the Haitian National Police, whose operations usually are carried out without MINUSTAH's operational contribution. We encourage MINUSTAH and the national authorities to continue their efforts to train 15,000 personnel by 2016. We welcome the positive cooperation between MINUSTAH, the United Nations police and other United Nations agencies, and the Haitian authorities aimed at attaining that objective.

Regarding the reconfiguration of the Mission, we support the two-phase drawdown plan proposed by the Secretary-General, as set out by resolution 2180 (2014). According to the rotation arrangements for certain contingents, troop levels were already adjusted to 4,615 at 18 February 2015, and should be declining gradually to just above 2,370 in 2016. We take due note of the appeal for the strengthening of the police component so as to handle follow-up and provide support for the electoral process. We hope that MINUSTAH will have the staffing levels and the training and effectiveness necessary to provide the technical and logistical assistance necessary for the holding of the elections. We would like here to reiterate our support to Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSTAH, and we thank her and all of her team for their commitment.

In conclusion, Chad reiterates that overcoming the political stalemate represents a crossroads on the road to stabilization for the country. Right now, it is important for all stakeholders to take this opportunity for peace and development.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Venezuela welcomes the convening of this open debate on the political situation in Haiti and highly value the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157), as presented by his Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Ms. Sandra Honoré. On behalf of my delegation, I should like to congratulate Ms. Honoré for the constructive and very important work that she has been carrying out together with her team to ensure stability and reconstruction in Haiti.

During their recent visit to Haiti, in January, the members of the Council reiterated the Council's commitment to support the people and the Government of Haiti in their efforts to strengthen peace, democracy and stability. The mission enabled Council members to learn about the important role of MINUSTAH in support of the efforts made by the Haitian Government

to strengthen its institutional capacity, which in turn will contribute to the economic and social recovery of this sisterly nation, in the framework of sustainable development.

We warmly welcome the efforts made by Haiti — efforts that must be expanded — to combat poverty and rebuild the country. We call on the international community to provide resolute support to such humanitarian and development efforts. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela will maintain and strengthen its assistance to and cooperation with the brotherly people of Haiti, especially in the area of social development, humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction of the country's infrastructure done through our Petrocaribe programme.

Our cooperation is based on the historical solidarity and friendship between our peoples. Despite all of the efforts made by the international community and the Government of Haiti, as well as the advances that have made in several important areas, such as the fight against cholera, enormous challenges remain in terms of promoting recovery and sustainable development, which would make it possible to overcome the serious economic, social and structural problems in the country stemming from colonialism, foreign interventions, the despotic dictatorships that have ruled Haiti and the continued political instability.

Haiti requires political stability and the strengthening of its institutions in order to successfully fight poverty. In that regard, we would like to reiterate what is stated in the report of the Secretary-General with regard to minimizing tensions and the normalization of consular relations between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, two brotherly countries that share the same territory.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomes the fact that the provisional Electoral Council is fully operational, and we welcome the agreement reached among the Haitian parties to re-establish an atmosphere of political trust in the lead-up to the legislative, municipal and presidential elections this year. We believe that the successful and peaceful conduct of the elections will be key for the future stabilization and development of Haiti.

While there have been encouraging developments, we believe that an ongoing dialogue between political stakeholders and the Government of Haiti is necessary to overcome all of the obstacles ahead. Once the elections have been held, it is politically imperative that there be respect for the results and the necessary commitment to the stability of the people of Haiti. In that regard, the international community must support this brotherly country in this very important event, bearing in mind that the Haitian people and the country's institutions are responsible for the successful conduct of the elections.

After 10 years of work by MINUSTAH, we have witnessed the increased stability of Haiti. We would like to acknowledge and commend the contribution made by the troop-contributing countries to MINUSTAH and that made by all countries that have contributed to the strengthening of the Haitian National Police. However, efforts to consolidate the rule of law in the country and its institutions must continue. The drafting of the penal code, the strengthening of the principal oversight institutions in the country, such as the Superior Council of the Judiciary, progress in the legislative reform process and the progress made in the training of the Haitian National Police, as well as the convening of eletions, inter alia, are positive indicators with respect to the preservation of the political and social integrity of Haiti.

Venezuela attaches particular importance to ensuring improvements in the capacity and professionalization of the Haitian National Police, in keeping with the strategic plan for 2012-2016, as it will be one of the institutions that will take over public-security tasks once MINUSTAH's mandate has been completed.

Venezuela wishes to highlight the work carried out by MINUSTAH in helping to stabilize the country. We therefore believe that the MINUSTAH drawdown strategy should be closely coordinated with the Government of Haiti, and that this will be a year of critical importance to the country's efforts to consolidate its institutions through the smooth conduct of elections. In that regard, MINUSTAH's presensce should be maintained.

We support the request, made by President Martelly in the letter he sent to the Secretary-General and that has been was distributed to Council members (S/2015/191), that MINUSTAH be drawn down in a gradual and orderly fashion, beginning in 2016 once a President has been elected. Any decision on the drawdown of the MIssion should be adopted on the basis of a prudent approach and in accordance with security conditions on the ground and and taking into account the capacity of Haitian national institutions to run the country's political, economic and social affairs.

Finally, Venezuela continues to encourage democratic development and political and social stability in a free and sovereignty Haiti, and reaffirms its resolve to continue supporting that brotherly Caribbean country so as to ensure that it enjoys full sovereignty and social justice and eradicates poverty, which are the main challenge it will face in the future.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Sandra Honoré for introducing the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2015/157) and offering her assessment of the situation in the country.

Over the reporting period, the general situation in Haiti continued to be marked by political ambiguity against the backdrop of an interruption in the electoral process and the expiration on 12 January of the mandate of the previous membership of the Parliament. In that regard, we welcome the key step taken by the President of Haiti and the leading political parties, including the opposition, to resolve that protracted problem by establishing a time frame for the conduct of elections. We hope that it will be upheld.

The conduct of fair and transparent elections is of the utmost importance in solidifying the foundations of the Haitian State. After all, in spite of the formidable tribulations endured by many Haitians in recent years, the key political players have succeeded, with the help of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, in improving a difficult situation. The number of internal internally displaced persons following the 2010 earthquake continues to fall. There are signs of economic growth and a slight downturn in demonstrations. The situation of organized crime, while remaining tense, is stable. Work on the penal code has been concluded. The Haitian National Police is improving both in numbers and in performance. The situation with respect to the spread of cholera is under control, while the rise in the number of cases of the disease is necessarily of concern. Port-au-Prince will need to demonstrate particular caution in that respect.

The establishment of enduring national dialogue will be critical to stabilizing the overall situation in the country. The Secretary-General's report clearly notes that, for the first time in many years, key political actors were able to reach a number of important compromises aimed at broadening and democratizing the political space and at strengthening national accountability for the state of affairs. We hope that the Government and all primary political parties will not rest on their laurels, especially since there will be a particularly pressing need throughout the electoral period to resolve many vital issues.

Against the backdrop of the planned drawdown of the military component of MINUSTAH, we welcome the Haitian National Police's demonstration of its capacity to address the rising security challenges. Nevertheless, this hardly mitigates the imperative for painstaking and maximally effective use, based on needs on the ground, of the Mission's capacities and resources so as to fulfil its mandate to provide stabilization assistance in Haiti and overcome the backlog of many years of problems in Haiti.

If the Haitian Government is to achieve full political normalization, it will require the appropriate and respectful support of the United Nations-led international community. However, if that process is to be effective and successful, a lead role will undoubtedly have to be played by the Government of Haiti, which has primary responsibility for the situation in the country, its development and the sound use of international assistance.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile wishes to express its gratitude to the presidency for convening this meeting on the situation in Haiti and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). This is a priority situation for Latin America and the Caribbean. We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré for introducing the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157).

In January, Council members had an opportunity to visit Haiti, where we witnessed the progress that had been achieved and took note of the remaining challenges, of which political dialogue remains the key. The Council was able to send a strong, unified message on the need for all stakeholders to work together to establish democratic and institutional processes in the country. Only a few days after the presentation of the electoral calendar by the provisional Electoral Council, we stress the need for the political stakeholders to assume their responsibility towards the Haitian people and strive together to ensure that all the elections are conducted successfully.

It is very difficult to put into context the process by which MINUSTAH will be strengthened and

reconfigured. In that regard, we note the message in the Secretary-General's report that

> "the lingering political crisis ... diverted attention from the focused pursuit of initiatives underpinning the consolidation process" (*S/2015/157, para. 53*).

Those initiatives are outlined in the annex to the report. The elections are thus a priority of fundamental importance, and we must act to ensure that they are conducted smoothly. The Mission must maintain its capacity to provide logistical support for the elections and to contribute to creating a stable and secure environment throughout Haiti.

The Secretary-General recognizes that the Government of Haiti must confront and assess those challenges on the basis of a gradual political context and the complexity of the elections. In his report, the Secretary-General also recognizes that, despite the fact that the Haitian National Police has improved its capacity to address crime and public disorder, the elections threaten to exacerbate the political climate in the country. In our view, this presages a period of uncertainty and a prolonged electoral process, which will likely involved several rounds of voting and possible run-off elections and may be exacerbated by a complex economic context that could impact Haiti this year.

As we reiterate the importance of ongoing support for Haiti, we must listen to the Haitian authorities, who have reaffirmed the importance of the military component of MINUSTAH in strengthening security throughout the electoral cycle, and have requested a sufficient and robust Mission presence. This and other requests are clearly reflected in the letter sent by the President of Haiti to the Secretary-General, which has been circulated as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2015/191.

Although the report of the Secretary-General indicates that the security situation has remained stable overall, we must not forget that the fact that, as of 18 February, the number of troops stood at 4,615 contributed to that. The real challenge will therefore begin after 1 July when, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 2180 (2014) — barring a revision — we will have to face a prolonged cycle of elections with practically half as many troops, and that at a time when there will still be a long way to go before the Haitian National Police can reach the appropriate minimum numbers to be able to face that challenge. Chile reiterates its support for a gradual reduction of the force that takes into account the electoral calendar, with a view to ensuring a process that guarantees transparency and democratic governance in a way that does not undermine the achievements of the past years. We welcome the announcement of the intention to make full use of the police levels that have been authorized. Honestly, however, we wonder whether it will be possible to reach those numbers in an opportune time to fully carry out the preventive functions performed by the military component.

I would not want to conclude my statement without reiterating that Haiti continues to face challenges on the humanitarian and development fronts. It is crucial that the international community continue to support initiatives aimed both at funding immediate needs — including with regard to the recent increase in cholera cases, the ongoing situation with the remaining internally displaced persons and the prospects for increasing food security — and at supporting Haiti's national capacities in the long term.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate Chile's commitment to the Haitian people, its authorities and MINUSTAH. Chile will continue to support the consolidation of the rule of law, democracy and the development of Haiti's capacities, as that contributes to building a political culture that is committed to the stability of the country and the progress of the Haitian people. We must do our work well in order to succeed.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of France.

I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti for her briefing. I also welcome the presence here today of His Excellency Ambassador Denis Régis, Permanent Representative of Haiti.

I associate myself with the statements to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Friends of Haiti.

It is always a pleasure to have Ms. Honoré with us to discuss the situation in Haiti. We commend her outstanding work as Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and we reiterate our full support to her and her team.

We have carefully considered the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157) on the work of

MINUSTAH six months after the renewal of its mandate under resolution 2180 (2014). The report confirms the pattern for MINUSTAH's evolution decided at the time. We agree with the analysis of the security situation and with the means to respond to it.

We believe that MINUSTAH's evolution is moving in a direction in line with choosing a response and mobilizing all available means on the basis of an overall assessment of the situation. That decision was endorsed by the Security Council, which also included a provision to revisit its position. We have given ourselves time to consider the issue, and the Council has visited the country. We understand the concern of some. We take particular note of the request by President Martelly to the Council. It is clear that the situation in Haiti includes risk factors. We continue to follow with the greatest interest the evolution of the situation in Haiti. That is our responsibility as a member of the Council and as a friend of Haiti. But we have not heard any argument to support maintaining the current arrangement, or for scaling back at a different proportion or according to some other schedule.

We believe it is now important to implement what we decided in October. This is a matter of the authority and credibility of the Council, which, let us recall, voted unanimously on how MINUSTAH would evolve. This is also about the confidence we have in the vitality of Haiti's democracy as an element of stability and development in the country. As we enter a major chapter in Haitian history, replete with so much promise, it is essential that MINUSTAH act without fear or paralysis. Furthermore, the Council does not overlook the security uncertainties. It is wrong to speak about a reduction of MINUSTAH; we are talking about a reconfiguration of its posture in accordance with the evolution of the situation.

In the run-up to the upcoming elections, the police force will be called upon to take a leading role, relying as a last resort on a military component with increased mobility.

It is also a matter of great conviction for France that the country's future problems must be met with solutions aimed at maintaing public order. As such, we welcome the decision of MINUSTAH to increase the number of its police component and make full use of troops up to the ceiling authorized by the Council.

Moreover, as a vision for the future of MINUSTAH finally emerges, we note the start of a reflection among MINUSTAH, the country team and the Government on how to conduct the transition of the international presence in Haiti after 2016. That is a positive message both for the Haitian authorities and the international community: we can finally look to the horizon.

This horizon is emerging now. An electoral calendar has been approved and published. Haitian voters have been called to the polls. The electoral machinery has been set into motion.

We welcome the establishment of the essential framework for holding the long-delayed elections and the renewal of democratic institutions. All stakeholders must continue to work together to strengthen mutual trust to allow for the holding of fair, transparent and inclusive elections. We call on all stakeholders to engage resolutely in defining a better future for Haiti and all Haitians.

Much remains to be done. There must be more efficiency, transparency and accessibility with regard to the rule of law and institutions. In terms of human rights, the determination of Haitian authorities has been clearly demonstrated. But human rights violations continue, and it is the responsibility of the State to turn words into deeds in this area. In that regard, we have in mind in particular the situation of prisoners, many of whom are still awaiting a court decision.

Finally, humanitarian challenges remain. The news looks good with regard to the cholera epidemic, but some prevalence remains. We fully support the work and commitment of the United Nations for the total eradication of the disease.

On those remaining challenges, it is imperative that the Haitian authorities take full ownership for the assistance provided to them. The United Nations should complement and support the work of the Haitian State, but it cannot substitute for it.

In conclusion, I would like to recall that MINUSTAH was deployed in 2004 in the context of acute crisis. That crisis was compounded a few years later by a tragic earthquake. Eleven years later, the situation has, fortunately, changed considerably. MINUSTAH must adapt to that favourable evolution, which is proof of its success. We expect the Secretary-General to present again in his next report recommendations for the next phase of the reconfiguration of MINUSTAH launched last October. We must go further, in the context of seeking greater efficiency in peacekeeping. We must

start thinking today of a Haiti after MINUSTAH. As such, we are eager to engage with our partners to consider the role that the Peacebuilding Commission could play to prepare for the future United Nations presence in Haiti.

For France, Haiti continues to be a dear friend. We will continue to stand resolutely by its side.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Haiti.

Mr. Regis (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Secretary-General for the quality of his report (S/2015/157) on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

The Haitian Government has considered with great interest the contents of the report, which follows the Secretary-General's field mission in Haiti last summer and that of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations some weeks before, as well as the visit by members of the Security Council in January. The report contains a very fair and lucid analysis of the crisis that has shaken Haiti over the past year and which, fortunately, is now passed. It also paints a balanced and objective picture of the overall situation in Haiti in terms of stabilization and security and the new opportunities emerging with the launch of the electoral process, which, as everyone recognizes, is a major test not only for MINUSTAH and the Haitian institutions, but also and especially for the future of democracy in Haiti.

In the first part of my statement I will provide some complementary information and assessments to those provided in the report of the Secretary-General. In the second part I will share with the Council some observations of the Haitian Government on the security situation on the eve of the elections and challenges that could be brought about by the upcoming electoral consultations, given their particular complexity, as mentioned by the Secretary-General.

The long political crisis in which Haiti has been mired, is over. Fortunately, reason has finally prevailed. Supporters of the republican order overwhelmingly chose to go to the ballots. The Secretary-General's report highlights that development. The President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly, has spared no sacrifice and no concession in establishing conditions conducive to the proper holding of the elections. That was demonstrated by the long series of consultations that he held with all political actors, the establishment of the presidential advisory commission and the full implementation of the recommendations issued by that body aimed at breaking the stalemate. The appointment of a new Prime Minister, the formation of a consensus Government, the reform carried out in the judiciary and the establishment of a provisional Electoral Council, in accordance with the requirements of article 289 of the Constitution, have all won over the most reticent and have convinced everyone of the unwavering will of Haiti's Head of State and Government to hold free, honest, democratic, transparent and inclusive elections in 2015. I am pleased to recall that that commitment was also solemnly reiterated to the members of the Security Council during their important visit to Haiti in January.

In the meantime, a new electoral decree, widely discussed by all of the stakeholders, was adopted on 2 March. Similarly, a realistic timetable has been presented by the Electoral Council for the holding of presidential, legislative, municipal and local elections this year. The executive just issued, on 13 March, a presidential decree calling people to the ballot box on 9 August, 25 October and, if necessary, 27 December. Therefore, after facing manifold obstacles that could have derailed the electoral process and jeopardized the gains made in recent years, the Haitian Government is pleased to have successfully completed what the Secretary-General characterized in his report as a decisive step towards the holding, by the end of the year, of the long-overdue elections.

Things are on track. The holding of the next election is crucial to the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law and lasting stability in Haiti. In that respect, the Haitian Government is deeply grateful to the Secretary-General and Security Council members for the interest, trust, solidarity and support they have shown to the Haitian people, in particular during the recent political crisis. We were particularly grateful for the efforts undertaken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, and the members of the core group for facilitating dialogue among all political actors. Their participation in the development of a consensus and the search for a constructive and viable solution deserves recognition.

MINUSTAH's presence has undoubtedly been an important factor in the establishment of stability and security in Haiti over the past decade. Ten years

after its establishment by the Security Council, the Mission, as everyone agrees, must evolve and adapt to an environment that is different from the one in which it was created. That is the spirit in which the gradual and progressive withdrawal of peacekeepers was announced, and, in principle, the withdrawal has been carried out up to the present from the perspective of the Mission's post-2016 reconfiguration, in accordance with resolution 2180 (2014).

However, without wanting to call into question the guidelines of the current withdrawal plan or the prospects for the Mission's reconfiguration, the Haitian Government believes that it would be useful to call on the Security Council to demonstrate the necessary flexibility in implementing the reconfiguration. In particular, in the light of the assessment of the situation and the current needs in the area of security, the Government believes that the timetable for the withdrawal should be reassessed so as to take into account, at each stage of the evolution, the actual situation on the ground and, in particular, the threats and risks that could jeopardize national stability and security. That is why the Haitian Government strongly hopes that, in the current pre-electoral context, MINUSTAH troop numbers can be maintained at a level at which they can significantly improve the security environment, which, as members know, is a key factor in voter confidence in the process and one of the determining factors for the success of the elections.

In his report, the Secretary-General rightly notes an upsurge in violence recorded over the past weeks in Haiti, although the security situation has generally remained stable and the ability of the Haitian National Police to maintain order has continued to improve. At this critical juncture, when the electoral process is entering its decisive phase, we are indeed witnessing a significant increase in violence, which is illustrated in particular by the resurgence of clashes between armed groups in certain neighbourhoods and a clear resurgence of crime and violent outbursts, which in turn give rise to socioeconomic or political protests. Those events, as the report shows, often occur along with the destruction of public property and facilities, as evidenced by the recent MINUSTAH vehicle fire.

In that context, the Haitian Government attaches the highest importance to the maintenance of a sufficient presence by the MINUSTAH military and police components. By supporting the work of the Haitian National Police in a more proactive manner and throughout the electoral cycle, those components would make a measurable contribution to enhancing confidence in the security environment.

Therefore, given the renewed insecurity, the obvious complexity of the upcoming elections and the special challenges that they will present in terms of managing logistics and security, as the report notes, the Government of Haiti believes it necessary to appeal to the Security Council and request that there be a pause in the ongoing withdrawal process of the MINUSTAH military contingents.

Meanwhile, the Haitian Government would greatly welcome the strengthening of the police component of MINUSTAH and its presence on the ground through increased support to the Haitian National Police and more sustained participation in the daily tasks relating to the safety and protection of citizens.

Finally, the Haitian Government believes that, in the light of the aforementioned resurgence in violence, the United Nations should reassess, jointly with the Haitian authorities, the rules for implementing the withdrawal plan in two phases, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's August 2014 report (S/2014/617), so as to take fully into account the evolution of the situation on the ground throughout the election cycle and beyond.

I would like to express the Government of Haiti's profound gratitude for the positions and recommendations just expressed here by a certain number of partners, including Spain, Venezuela, Chile, New Zealand and, of course, your country, France, Mr. President, and for the interest expressed in the Haitian Government's request. I noted the remark made to that effect by the President. However, the Haitian Government's request relates to paragraph 4 of resolution 2180 (2014), of 14 October 2014, which states the Council's commitment to act at any time to adapt MINUSTAH's mandate and force levels, if compelled by a change of conditions in Haiti and if necessary to preserve the progress Haiti has made towards durable security and stability.

The Government is fully aware that the responsibility for organizing elections and security rests with the Haitian authorities. In that context, it fully counts on the spirit of cooperation and flexibility that has always governed the cooperation between the United Nations and Haiti. MINUSTAH's contribution will certainly be essential to the holding of elections in the best possible

security conditions, which is key to their credibility and legitimacy. In the same vein, the Government endorses the deployment of international election observer missions, which could only contribute to improving confidence in the process.

The Haitian Government attaches great importance to the eminently constructive role played by the United Nations in Haiti. It reiterates its gratitude to all the Member States that continue, in the spirit of solidarity and international cooperation, to support the Haitian people in their march towards the building of the rule of law and a democratic society. I also express the Government's gratitude to the friendly nations in the hemisphere that have recently spared no effort to draw the Council's attention to the need for consistent support by the international community for Haiti and its people.

We welcome the prospects for such continued aid in the upcoming election cycle, whose importance we all understand. We must not lose sight of the ultimate goal, which is also the very foundation of the Mission, namely, the consolidation of the rule of law and the realization of long-term stability, which will ensure the sustainability of democracy, growth and development in Haiti.

That is why it is of the highest importance that every effort be undertaken to promote a gradual and orderly transfer of MINUSTAH's responsibilities. That transfer must, at every stage, take into consideration the progress made and the existing vulnerabilities. Care must be taken especially to avoid any premature withdrawal that could create a vacuum in the security situation, as was so eloquently recalled in the most recent report of the Secretary-General.

I once again thank the Secretary-General for his report, which will undoubtedly shape the Council's work with regard to the evolution and reconfiguration of the Mission, and I reiterate the determination of the Haitian Government to continue to work closely with the Security Council and the Secretariat to fulfil the mandate entrusted to MINUSTAH. I hope, in particular, that the Council will grant Haiti its priority attention and take whatever follow-up measures are deemed necessary based on the requests of the Haitian Government.

Haiti is the oldest child of France in the Americas. You, Sir, know of the special historic and cultural ties — and every other type of tie — between my country and yours. You stated earlier that France stood united with Haiti. I would like to reiterate to you that Haiti shares a family bond with France.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil) (*spoke in French*): We thank France for having organized this debate. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her briefing. I reiterate my Government's respect for her leadership and the ongoing support that she provides to the consolidation of peace and democracy in Haiti. We recognize the troop-contributing countries and the United Nations personnel deployed in Haiti. I also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Haiti, Ambassador Régis, here among us.

Allow me to start on a positive note. Brazil agrees with the British economist Paul Collier that there are reasons to be optimistic about the future of Haiti. Haiti's lack of inter-ethnic conflict, its location in a region of peace and cooperation, its proximity to the largest market in the world and its dynamic and highly skilled diaspora in many developed countries. I would add to that list the resilience and courage of the Haitian people. Haiti is the first black republic in the Americas and inspired several nineteenth century freedom movements. Despite that history, the country was isolated and even neglected in the region for some time. Today, thanks to the efforts of regional and subregional organizations and to the contributions of countries in the region to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Haiti has been welcomed and integrated in its regional context in Latin America and the Caribbean.

We must also recognize the progress made by Haiti since the earthquake, much of which is highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157). Beyond Haiti's macroeconomic stability, it is very encouraging to see improvements in the indicators related to the Millennium Development Goals, which are the result of efforts by both the Government and other stakeholders, which have focused on education, health and the reduction of inequality and extreme poverty. In that regard, I would like to highlight the real impact of a number of programmes developed in recent years, such as "Ti Manman Cheri" in the field of education and "Aba Grangou" in the area of food

security. The decrease in the number of displaced persons is also remarkable.

(spoke in English)

Brazil welcomes the Security Council visit to Haiti last January, which was important in terms of reiterating international support for Haiti and encouraging the Government to quickly organize elections. The unified and constructive message transmitted to Haitian political actors contributed directly to recent political achievements. We are fully aware, nevertheless, that the process still requires close monitoring.

Brazil supports the Secretary-General's positive assessment regarding stability and security in Haiti. While recognizing that there are still reasons for concern in the security area, including in the light of the upcoming electoral process, the enhanced performance of the police in preventing crimes and controlling civil unrest is worth underlining.

That should not give rise to complacency. The Haitian National Police has yet to make further progress. We encourage the Haitian National Police to continue to benefit from MINUSTAH's efforts to ensure a successful handover of responsibility for security in critical areas.

The relatively small number of operations that have required active engagement on the part of the military contingent of MINUSTAH since the previous report (S/2014/617) illustrates both the Haitian National Police's increasing capacity and the fact that the current stability threats in Haiti demand a response that is increasingly less military in nature.

In that context, the continuation of the drawdown foreseen in resolution 2180 (2014) is natural, as there has been no dramatic deterioration in the security situation, nor are we facing challenges that were not foreseen when the decision to implement the drawdown was taken last October. Should, however, new circumstances lead to a deterioration of the situation on the ground, a revision of the consolidation plan by the Security Council could be considered.

We recognize that the electoral process may exacerbate tensions, and we therefore support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the posture of uniformed personnel be reviewed so as to ensure maximum visibility and full use of the authorized force levels.

We concur with the Secretary-General's view on the importance of ensuring Haiti's leadership of the electoral process ahead. A lighter presence by MINUSTAH should be accompanied by a stronger role for national institutions.

In spite of its reconfiguration, MINUSTAH should continue to promote a culture of peace by maintaining its mandated tools to develop quick-impact and community violence-reduction projects, as well as an adequate engineering capability.

Brazil welcomes the efforts of the United Nations country team to consolidate a comprehensive integrated strategic framework aligned with Haiti's priorities. The challenge henceforth is to provide sustainability for the gains of recent years, allowing for a gradual reduction in the presence of United Nations troops while the country evolves towards a stage of increasing stability with institutional, economic and social progress.

In that process, the international community's relationship with Haiti should increasingly be guided by the establishment of partnerships capable of improving the living conditions within Haiti, the only country in the Americas still categorized as least developed.

Without forgetting the enormous challenges that the country still faces with regard to modernization, Brazil is convinced that we should continue to look to Haiti's future with optimism.

Despite the concern caused by the political crisis that led to the paralysis of the Parliament, we welcome the various negotiations that led to the formation of a transitional Government, the appointment of the members of the provisional Electoral Council and the recent adoption of the electoral law by presidential decree.

Brazil hopes that progress and a constructive attitude on the part of the Haitian political actors will lead the country out of the crisis and contribute to the holding of fair and transparent elections.

Brazil's commitment to Haiti is long-term. A scenario of prolonged political stalemate and the prevalence of sectoral interests over collective wellbeing will make our task more difficult. We therefore urge Haitian leaders to persevere in their efforts to deepen the social compact and consolidate democracy in Haiti as soon as possible.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Carrera Castro (Guatemala) *(spoke in Spanish)*: I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Sandra Honoré, for her very informative presentation, as well as for her presentation of the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/157). We reiterate our full support for the Special Representative and for the work being carried out on the ground in Haiti. We would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Haiti for his valuable observations.

(spoke in French)

I should like to have a voice such as that of the Permanent Representative of Haiti. We may well call him the Pavarotti of diplomacy.

(spoke in Spanish)

I would like to highlight a few points with regard to the Secretary-General's report. First of all, we continue to profoundly regret the fact that it has not been possible to hold the elections that have been pending for so long in Haiti. And we regret the fact that that has resulted in the dissolution of the Haitian Parliament, which occurred in January.

We welcome the recent approval of the legal framework and the electoral calendar, and we believe that that is a step in the right direction. Given the fact that the elections have been pending for so long, we hope that efforts will be redoubled and that additional measures will be taken to ensure that the elections are held this year.

As we have reiterated several times over the past four years, elections are decisive. The proper functioning of democratic institutions depends upon the smooth conduct of elections. We are concerned that the delay in the holding of the elections is seriously affecting the system of checks and balances that allows for the effective functioning of democracy in Haiti.

Secondly, we have noted that the settlement of political differences through dialogue has been key for the progress being made in various areas in Haiti. On the one hand, we cannot hope for simple solutions to extremely complex problems. On the other hand, we know that the resolution of Haiti's problems lies fundamentally in the hands of the Haitian people. Nevertheless, the message that we would like to send today is that it is that the Haitian leaders in the executive and legislative branches, civil society and the private sector must be up to the challenge and collaborate and work together constructively for the country's development.

We would like to emphasize the importance of national strategies that bring about reconciliation and that avoid winner-takes-all situations. Such situations close the door to true consensus and serious commitments. In that regard, we welcome the initiatives, good offices and activities being carried out by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Thirdly, the report of the Secretary-General warns specifically of the fact that the upcoming elections run the risk of further exacerbating the political tensions in the country. It is very important, in that regard, that MINUSTAH continue its consolidation process. As the Council well knows, a sound security environment is essential for the satisfactory carrying out of the much-awaited electoral process. We take note of the concerns expressed by the Government of Haiti, and we think there should be a favourable response to the requests set out in the letter of President Martelly to the Secretary-General, which the representative of Haiti reiterated here today. We would like to echo the comments made by the representatives of Spain, Venezuela, Chile and New Zealand in calling openness in that regard.

The Secretary-General's report gives an overview of the generally stable security situation in the country. At the same time, it mentions an increase in violence, civil disturbances and criminal activity. We note the progress being made in increasing the capacity of the Haitian National Police. And we are aware that the National Police is not yet in a position to respond effectively, without assistance, to incidents involving instability and demonstrations. That is why the firm support of MINUSTAH continues to be essential. There are important functions that MINUSTAH should continue to ensure, such as the management of Haitian prisons. MINUSTAH must fulfil an increasingly important role in terms of security sector reform, as well as in terms of border control and security.

Fourthly, serious efforts at peacebuilding must begin while MINUSTAH is still present and can perform the appropriate tasks and adopt measures to ensure that the future transition of the Mission does not create vacuums in security nor result in a decrease in the international community's level of commitment and support. We

need to have an inclusive approach, especially on the part of the troop- and police-contributing countries, in order to ensure that those countries' views, including Guatemala, are fully taken into account. Similarly, it is necessary to ensure that the various stages of the gradual withdrawal of MINUSTAH occur on the basis of consultations with the Government of Haiti.

We note paragraph 55 of the Secretary-General's report: any transition plan requires comprehensive, broad-based discussions on how to change the mandate, structure and nature of MINUSTAH in order to ensure that its gradual withdrawal is linked with the country's having developed much stronger institutions and achieved significant progress towards lasting stability and development. MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team must work together in a timely manner to achieve a transition plan that aims to support the Government's priorities for the strengthening of stability and development with a view to an eventual handover by MINUSTAH.

Fifthly, MINUSTAH is a success story, but that is not the whole story. Security and lasting political stability will be achieved only through the effective presence of military and police, not simply through a political process. Sustainable socioeconomic progress is also needed. Much of Haiti's progress remains fragile, especially after the terrible difficulties of the past five years. The case of Haiti reminds us once again that we should not consider security and development as separate spheres. They are inextricably linked.

Finally, Guatemala remains firmly committed to MINUSTAH and to Haiti. We believe that with the constant efforts of the leaders of Haiti, the unshakeable determination of the exceptional Haitian people and the continued support of the international community will ensure that Haiti can achieve lasting security and a stable democracy rooted in socioeconomic improvement for all. Haiti must choose its own path, and we all must contribute to helping the Haitian people to achieve it.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Morales (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this debate. I also wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her briefing and to recognize her tremendous efforts in support of the people and authorities of Haiti.

In recent days, we have witnessed significant progress on the path towards the consolidation of democracy and the strengthening of Haitian institutions. While the domestic political situation remains complex, it is remarkable that the Electoral Council, after broad consultations with Haitian political actors, has now proposed an electoral calendar, after repeated postponements, that can lead to the realization of the aspirations of the Haitian people. We also recognize that President Martelly has welcomed the proposal and has officially announced three rounds of elections for presidential, legislative, municipal and local authorities. Carrying out a successful election process poses significant challenges for the Haitian authorities, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the international community. The magnitude of the task is significant, if we take into account the number of polling places in which the elections will take place, the logistics involved and the extent of the elections, which will take place throughout the entire national territory.

However, the elections must be conducted in a free, peaceful and inclusive manner and in accordance with the established regulatory framework. That will be crucial not only for the standardization and legitimacy of Haitian institutions, but also for the population to have a voice through their representatives with regard to the future of the country. Haiti must focus on priority areas, and the international community must provide the needed support and assistance. That is why the election timetable should be followed strictly. The authorities responsible for the preparation and conduct of elections must have the resources necessary for the proper performance of their duties. Equally important is the joint work, cooperation and constructive dialogue with all Haitian political sectors. The work they carry out with the national authorities must maintain the credibility of the electoral process, for which a peaceful and stable environment must be established. In that regard, any differences among political actors should be addressed through the appropriate existing institutional means and avoid polarization, which would threaten the country's stability and the outcome of the elections.

In supporting the elections, MINUSTAH and the international community play a fundamental role, as the elections provide a key opportunity both to overcome the political crisis and to normalize the democratic system in the country so as to support the creation and strengthening of national capacities and institutions in

electoral matters in the long term. Given that fact, we must define clear and timely areas in which to work together and provide the necessary support in response to needs of the national authorities. There must be a recognition of national ownership and leadership in the conduct of the electoral process. In addition, the international community must be prepared to provide the necessary support to the national authorities on technical issues relating to the elections and respond to the Government's call for the implementation of election monitoring missions, the presence of which can be decisive in ensuring the legitimacy of the process.

While the Secretary-General mentions in his report (S/2015/157) that the security situation in the country remains stable and that significant progress has been made by the Haitian National Police, it is essential to recognize that the country is far from achieving its goal of security, as President Martelly stated in his recent communication to the Secretary-General. The complex security situation, which has seen spikes in certain types of crime and civil unrest, must now also be understood through the lens of such security risks, particularly those that arise during a relatively long electoral process that will take place in an environment characterized by political polarization. That is why we cannot be complacent. The Security Council and MINUSTAH must be vigilant with regard to threats and developments on the ground and be sensitive to the requests of the Government of Haiti, pursuant to resolution 2180 (2014), so that the Mission can act at any time to adapt its mandate and force levels and maintain the country's current level of stability and security. It is equally important that the Secretariat be able to promptly take the necessary actions to make full use of the authorized police strengh, and that troop-contributing countries be prepared to answer the call in that regard.

The challenges facing Haiti will not end with the conclusion of the elections. As important as they are, we cannot lose sight of the need to continue efforts to strengthen the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights, and socioeconomic development in the long term, among other matters. MINUSTAH must therefore continue to support national efforts and evolve according to the realities on the ground, while promoting adequately the transfer of responsibilities to the national authorities and the country team when conditions are favourable.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mayr-Harting, head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Mayr-Hartig (*spoke in French*): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2015/157), and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her briefing. I also wish to thank my colleague the Permanent Representative of Haiti for his statement.

The candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

In spite of the significant efforts made after the earthquake of 2010 and the undeniable progress accomplished since then, Haiti continues to face formidable socioeconomic and development challenges. The country has committed itself to seeking stability and building on democratic achievements, which will be crucial to its future in the short and long terms. Ongoing serious socioeconomic inequalities are a genuine threat to the stability and security of the country. The European Union, which was a loyal partner of Haiti even before the disaster of 2010 and has been even more so since, is determined to act in harmony with the country's other partners to support it in this very sensitive phase.

The European Union welcomes the continuing decrease in the number of displaced people living in camps more than five years after the earthquake. However, nearly 80,000 people are still dealing with deplorable living conditions and are more vulnerable than ever. It is therefore essential that the Government of Haiti continue its efforts to ensure that they have acceptable living conditions and that their basic human rights are respected. Considering those persistent needs, the European Union and its member States are firmly committed to continuing their humanitarian assistance to Haiti. To give one example, this year the European Union decided to continue its humanitarian response in Haiti with an €11.6 million programme designed to respond to the needs of the displaced, contain the cholera epidemic and provide sustainable assistance to rural populations suffering from food

insecurity. In addition, we will contribute to improving natural-disaster preparedness.

It is also important to strengthen people's resilience. In that regard, the European Union is providing full support to the Haiti Transitional Appeal for 2015-2016, recently launched by the Haitian authorities and the United Nations, a strategy with resilience at its centre. The European Union has also begun developing a strategy for resilience in Haiti designed to support the Government's efforts.

With regard to development aid and cooperation, the European Union and the Government of Haiti have signed a planning agreement for the period 2014 to 2020 with a budget of €420 million, since the funds made available during the previous planning period have been fully allocated. This attests to the European Union's continuing commitment to supporting the Government's development and socioeconomic recovery strategy for the country. In 2014, the European Union and the Government of Haiti signed an agreement on a €120 million project in support of State reform, designed to increase the State's budgetary capacity in promoting tax reform, as well as to improve the management of public finances, support the implementation of a national policy for primary education and strengthen governance. That contributes fundamentally to the healthy functioning of the Haitian State, and thus to the country's stability.

Beyond that, several areas in need of intervention that are covered by the European Union's programme for 2014 to 2020, such as urban planning, education and support for State administrative reform, can help to contribute to the United Nations plan for eradicating cholera. The European Commission is in the process of ensuring that resilience is integrated into all of its programmes in order to maintain the links between humanitarian aid and development. A joint humanitarian development framework is currently being developed. In that context, the European Union remains open to maintaining a dialogue with the relevant United Nations agencies so as to study specific possibilities for cooperation.

Haiti cannot afford another major political and security crisis and must ensure that the progress it has made cannot be reversed. In that regard, in coordination with the other members of the core group, in the past few months the European Union has kept up its contacts with various institutional stakeholders in order to encourage dialogue and reach the necessary commitments to ensure the holding of presidential, legislative and local elections, which must be transparent, credible and inclusive. Despite the fact that the new electoral law could not be enacted by 12 January, and that as a result the Senate and hence the entire legislature were rendered dysfunctional, an agreement was reached with part of the opposition on creating a new Government and establishing a new provisional Electoral Council. The Electoral Council has outlined an electoral calendar and we have hopes that the electoral process will begin soon.

The European Union commends President Martelly for agreeing to considerable sacrifices in order to promote a consensus on emerging from the crisis, and calls on all political actors to commit to a peaceful and responsible electoral process. The European Union will give that process substantial support. To that end, in addition to a €5 million contribution to the electoral fund managed by the United Nations Development Programme, we may consider sending an election observation mission, or at the very least a group of electoral experts, as for the 2011 elections. Furthermore, besides the regular high-level political dialogue with the Haitian Government, the European Union is continuing discussions and advisory work with the Club of Madrid aimed at a huge number of institutional and civil-society stakeholders. The programme's purpose is to go beyond the study of electoral issues and to tackle more global topics relating to governance, strengthening the rule of law and reforming the constitutional framework.

We also note, within the general improvement in the security situation, a significant increase in protests motivated by socioeconomic factors and a resort to violence. In the context of a very significant and complex election year, the European Union believes that a more stable and inclusive political climate that transcends political divisions and short-term interests is all the more essential. The contribution of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) therefore remains crucial to the country's democracy, peace and stability. In the European Union's view, the presence of a MINUSTAH military contingent can still make a major contribution to ensuring peace and stability in Haiti during the election period, in accordance with resolution 2180 (2014).

In conclusion, I would like to express the European Union's appreciation for MINUSTAH's important contribution, during its 10 years of existence, to

stabilizing security and consolidating democracy and the rule of law in Haiti. The European Union remains committed to supporting the efforts of the Haitian authorities, the United Nations and the international community in order to ensure a better future for all the people of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Sandoval (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank your delegation, Mr. President, for convening this debate, and Ms. Sandra Honoré for the comprehensive briefing she has given us.

Mexico welcomes the fact that the situation in Haiti has shown some progress in the areas of security, strengthening the rule of law and training the Haitian National Police. However, we are concerned that once again the country was unable to hold its elections as expected. We therefore renew our call to Haiti's political forces, civil society and the private sector to put collective interests first and, through constructive, dialogue ensure that the elections will be held in 2015.

The fact that the pre-election period coincided with the absence of a functional Parliament and the resurgence of outbreaks of violence presents particular challenges that could derail the progress made over the past 11 years. Those events are a reminder of the inherent links between security, development and the protection and promotion of human rights that constitute a central tenet of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

In the context of the necessary reconfiguration of the Mission pursuant to resolution 2180 (2014), Mexico joins the appeals of the Secretary-General, the Haitian Government and the Force Commander to guarantee a stable security environment in order to bring the pending political and institutional processes to a successful conclusion. We must take advantage of the multidimensional character of the Mission in the face of the prevailing situations in which the Government and the people of Haiti clearly need MINUSTAH's contribution, both in terms of security and the strengthening of State institutions.

The visit to Haiti made by members of the Council last January at the request of Chile and the United States is a clear demonstration of the commitment of this organ to directly consider the situation on the ground, obtain at first hand more ample and better information about the difficulties the Caribbean country still faces and determine the next steps in a more calibrated manner. The appeal by the Haitian Head of State to the Secretary-General to maintain a visible and robust presence in the military and civilian components of MINUSTAH and the request for a pause in the process of reducing it should be heard and analysed in their proper perspective and from the point of view of the electoral situation in motion.

Mexico believes that the reduction and eventual withdrawal of MINUSTAH should be progressive but careful and must be based on a transition plan coordinated among the Mission, the States Members of the United Nations, particularly the troop- and police-contributing countries, and especially the Haitian Government. Preconceived schedules are sometimes counterproductive, and the Haitian case is no exception. The abrupt withdrawal of the Mission could further complicate the political instability, with risks of incalculable consequences. We are confident that in considering the future of MINUSTAH, the Council will make decisions without compromising security and allow Haitians and the international community as a whole to consolidate the gains made in order to make Haiti another success story.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Council that, following the announcement that Mexico would gradually resume its participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, we will make a contribution of personnel in the near future — namely, a lieutenant commander communications specialist and an infantry major from the military command staff, who will play an advisory and operations planning role at MINUSTAH headquarters.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Okamura (Japan) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's debate. I would also like to express my appreciation and thanks to Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for her very important briefing. I would like to thank the personnel of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for their commitment and their work in very difficult circumstances.

(spoke in English)

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on MINUSTAH issued on 4 March (S/2015/157). Although various challenges persist, we are very pleased to see progress and positive signs in the stabilization and recovery process in Haiti. We recognize that developments in the political process, which include the holding of long-overdue elections, the increase in the capacity of the Haitian National Police, the 50 per cent reduction in new cases of cholera last year and so forth, are the result of efforts by the Haitian authorities, its people and the international community, including, of course, MINUSTAH. Japan is proud to see those improvements in Haiti since it dispatched approximately 2,200 Self-Defense Forces personnel to the country.

With respect to political developments in Haiti, Japan highly appreciates the concrete progress that has been made so far. Examples include the establishment of the new provisional Electoral Council in January, the promulgation of the electoral decree by the President of Haiti on 2 March and the announcement of election dates on 11 March. Japan strongly hopes that the elections will take place in a just and transparent manner.

Mr. Bertoux took the Chair.

From that point of view, the Government of Japan signed a document with the United Nations Development Programme on 11 March to provide approximately $4.5 million to assist in the smooth holding of elections. We also expect this effort to contribute to nation-building, which includes supporting democracy, respect for the rule of law and stable peace.

We welcome resolution 2180 (2014), adopted last October, which provides for the drawdown of MINUSTAH's forces and a reduction in police component levels. The human and financial resources that the United Nations can invest in peacekeeping missions are limited. It is imperative that we reduce the size of missions when concrete progress is being made by them, as the need to create new missions and reinforce others is real. The success of a peacekeeping mission means that it has created an environment in which it is no longer needed.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Japan counts on the continuous and strong leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, so that MINUSTAH can achieve success in the context I just mentioned, by accomplishing its mandate, which includes assistance with the upcoming elections.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Thornberry (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, let me thank the President of the Security Council for his initiative in convening this debate. I also welcome the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, and I welcome her briefing on the report of Secretary-General on the situation in Haiti (S/2015/157).

Peru is committed to achieving and consolidating security, stability, sustainable development and the strengthening of institutions in Haiti. Therefore, my country has actively participated in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) since 2004 and intends to continue contributing to this operation, which is the sole peacekeeping mission in the Americas.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be made shortly by the representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti, especially with regard to the recognition of the important role played by MINUSTAH in supporting the stabilization and security of Haiti as well as in strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law in the country. I should like to make some additional comments in my national capacity.

After the serious political and institutional crisis that prevented the timely holding of elections to replace local authorities and thereby avoid the dysfunction of the Haitian Congress for lack of quorum, my delegation welcomes the recent publication of an electoral timetable to carry out presidential, legislative, municipal and local elections throughout the second half of this year. For Peru, the elections represent a milestone in the process of democratic consolidation in Haiti, which is why my delegation reiterates its call to all Haitian political forces to cooperate with national authorities with a view to concluding those processes and to participate actively in them. Additionally, we expect the international community to cooperate in the process and expect to receive timely information on the progress of the preparations and the execution of the electoral calendar.

While the security situation in Haiti has remained stable thanks to the crucial support of MINUSTAH,

the situation is quite complex, given the increase in the protests, the deepening economic crisis, the lack of basic services and the increasing political tensions customary in election years.

Against that backdrop, Peru believes that the drawdown of MINUSTAH's military component, which will be implemented in the coming weeks, may affect MINUSTAH's operational capacity to assist in guaranteeing security and providing the technical and logistical assistance needed to conduct the three rounds of elections scheduled.

Peru reiterates its firm belief that decisions regarding the future of MINUSTAH must be made exclusively on the basis of the conditions on the ground — the criterion on which the MINUSTAH consolidation plan was designed.

While we recognize the progress made in the professionalization and training of the Haitian National Police, the Secretary-General's report notes that that institution does not yet have the capacity to maintain public order and safeguard the security of the population throughout the entire country. It therefore requires the operational and strategic collaboration of MINUSTAH. In that regard, we believe that MINUSTAH's presence in Haiti remains essential in working with the Haitian authorities to maintain security and order as part of a process of stabilizing and strengthening democracy in the country.

My delegation has consistently maintained its commitment to the principle of national ownership, with the understanding that peace must be an inherently national process, in which peacekeeping operations support national authorities in setting out and implementing their own stabilization and development priorities. Peru therefore reaffirms its support for the Haitian constitutional authorities in their task of stabilizing Haiti, and asks the Council to take Haiti's position into account when taking decisions regarding the timeline for transitioning the MINUSTAH mandate and regarding the nature of the future United Nations presence in the country. That position was expressed most clearly by the Permanent Representative of Haiti during this morning's debate.

We join the call for the United Nations and the international community to continue supporting Haiti, while recalling that our assistance should be comprehensive, given the interdependent nature of the three pillars on which the work of the Organization is based: upholding peace and security, attaining sustainable development, and promoting and protecting human rights.

In conclusion, my delegation reiterates that MINUSTAH's important achievements to date must not lead us to believe that our work is done; it is far from it. Experience has shown us the serious consequences suffered in the past when the Organization decided to withdraw its presence from the ground too early. My country therefore wants MINUSTAH to successfully complete the task it is carrying out so well in Haiti, without haste or artificial deadlines.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in French*): I congratulate France on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month. We appreciate your delegation's intelligence and temperance — qualities that are crucial for guiding the work of the Security Council.

I would also like to express my warm congratulations to all the peoples, including Haiti, who this week are celebrating La semaine de la langue française et de la Francophonie.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ambassador Sandra Honoré, for introducing the report (S/2015/157) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and to recognize her tireless work as Head of the Mission. Let me also acknowledge in particular the valuable intervention of the Permanent Representative of Haiti, Mr. Denis Régis.

In September 2014, when the Security Council considered the situation in Haiti, the prospect of holding partial legislative and local elections seemed hard to envision (see S/PV.7262). At that time we also welcomed the fact that Haiti had taken decisive steps towards the holding of such elections. Today we are seeing the results of that. Haiti has taking decisive steps towards holding elections thanks to the efforts, dialogue and joint work of Haitian political actors and the Haitian people. I want to underscore the decisive participation of women's groups in building greater democracy, peace and security in Haiti.

With regard to the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157), I would like to make two comments.

First, I reiterate the importance of the full participation of the Haitian Government in taking decisions regarding the presence of the United Nations in its country. We believe that we must never overlook the concerns of the Haitian Government and the Haitian electoral authorities regarding the absence of troops in six of the ten regions as a result of the implementation of the Council's decision to reduce the size of the military contingent. Both have made public statements in that regard and have requested MINUSTAH's support in logistics and security issues. In that regard, President Martelly stated in his letter to the Secretary-General of 9 March, which was cited by other colleagues, that he would like the United Nations to put the process of military withdrawal on hold and strengthen the police capacity and MINUSTAH's presence in the field.

Secondly, we are concerned about reports of a recent increase in violence among armed gangs, which has complicated the security situation in the country. As we explained after the adoption of resolution 2180 (2014), in our view security has not improved sufficiently to draw down the MINUSTAH force strength so rapidly and abruptly.

Together with other countries of our region in September 2014 and during the negotiation of resolution 2180 (2014), Argentina emphasized the importance of maintaining the mandate and configuration MINUSTAH and to consider options for its reconfiguration only from 2015. We did so out of our concern to maintain stability during the electoral process and the need to strengthen the operational capabilities and resources of the Haitian National Police, which is the force that ultimately will be responsible for security after the withdrawal of the international community.

In 2015, according to the electoral calendar, the country will hold three rounds of elections, over a period stretching almost six months. At the same time, despite the significant progress made, the Haitian National Police still lacks the resources to take full responsibility for security, especially during the elections. We therefore remain concerned about the sudden and rapid reduction of the military contingent, preventing the provision of the necessary logistics and security support.

In particular, we are concerned that the military component, after being reducing by 53 per cent, will no longer be able to carry out the important deterrence and prevention tasks and patrols they have carried out to date. Moreover, as the report acknowledges, the force strength of the police component authorized by the Security Council has not been reached, meaning that the reduction will not necessarily be offset by a strengthening of police capacity. We are further concerned by the recent increase in violence that was mentioned in the report, particularly given that the drawdown of the military contingent is not yet complete.

Finally, I should like to make three short comments on issues that, while not at the heart of the Council's agenda, have been mentioned in some statements.

With respect to the demonstrations and social protests taking place, all of our countries — developed and developing alike — have seen their people protesting and demanding greater democracy, rights and freedoms. However, that is not an indication that international peace and security are at risk, or that a given country is facing a critical situation. We must ensure — to wit, MINUSTAH and the international community — that the demonstrations, those legitimate social protests taking place in all of our countries, take place within a framework of law and democracy and the absence of violence.

As to the second matter, references have been made to prisons. I believe that the fact that more than 10 million people are incarcerated around the world is an issue that one day will require serious consideration in an appropriate body of the United Nations. The numbers vary greatly by country, however, it bears mentioning that some 40 or 50 per cent of them have not been convicted. Should Haiti therefore be without blame? No. I simply wish to note that Haiti is not the only country dealing with the issue.

I would like to recognize the tremendous work carried out by the international community in the camps for internally displaced persons, nearly 300,000 of whom were displaced by the earthquake. MINUSTAH has experienced two major events in the past 10 years: the catastrophic earthquake and the cholera outbreak. As Ms. Honoré informed us today, of the nearly 300,000 internally displaced persons in 2012, about 70,000 to 80,000 remain in camps presently. Nevertheless, there must be a focus on the living conditions in the camps.

Argentina, along with many other countries of the region, has made significant efforts to support the Haitian people and Government in their efforts to

bolster the democratic process, security, human rights and economic and social development. That is why we believe that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti should remain in the country for as long as necessary, to show that it is possible to work with the people and the Government of a country to achieve the goals all of us need so much, namely, democracy, human rights and peace. It is not about MINUSTAH's presence in perpetuity; it is about moving from assistance and security to cooperation for development.

A leader of our time, who will speak for the first time before the General Assembly in September, has said that solidarity is a means of making history. It is our hope that it is the path that the Council will choose for the beloved people and the Government of Haiti. May solidarity become a means of making history.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Bonser (Canada) (*spoke in French*): It has been a tumultuous few months since we last convened to discuss the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (see S/PV.7262). A new Prime Minister was named and a new Government sworn in. Canada congratulates Mr. Evans Paul and his Cabinet and wishes them success in achieving their objectives. There are significant challenges ahead for Haiti and its new Government, and Canada offers them its renewed friendship and continued assistance.

Canada has shared a unique and multifaceted partnership with Haiti for decades.

(*spoke in English*)

Since 2006, Canada has provided more than $1.4 billion in development and humanitarian assistance. Canada has worked on improvements in a number of areas, including economic growth, food security and governance — and, line with Canada's Group of Eight Muskoka Initiative, maternal, newborn and child health. Those efforts have been designed to complement and support the efforts and actions of our partners, including the international and regional bodies in Haiti.

Canada has long held the position that holding elections is a necessary step towards advancing and reinforcing democratic stability in Haiti. With the recent shift to rule by decree, the Haitian people cannot wait any longer. It is imperative that elections take place in 2015.

Canada welcomes the recent publication of the electoral decree and calendar, and we strongly urge all political stakeholders to continue to work collaboratively to support all efforts towards fair, democratic and inclusive elections. Canada has announced $8.7 million in support of the elections through the United Nations Development Program and the National Democratic Institute. That contribution, along with those of our partners, will complement the Government of Haiti's own election funding.

We recognize and appreciate the efforts of MINUSTAH in providing electoral assistance and logistical support for those elections, noting the importance of strengthening the status and capacity of Haitian institutions to take on an increasing role in the future.

Canada continues to support the important work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. For 10 years, MINUSTAH has worked to improve security conditions and contribute to lasting stability in Haiti. Considerable progress has been made.

Canada welcomes the recent Security Council visit to Haiti, and in particular the concentrated review process that has taken place with regard to the Mission's mandate. Canada maintains that the gradual reduction of the United Nations footprint in Haiti must continue to reflect the situation on the ground and the capacity of the Haitian State to deliver security to its population.

We are pleased that support to the Haitian National Police (HNP) remains strong. Indeed, the HNP has demonstrated increasing capacity in recent months. We commend both the Government of Haiti and the Mission's efforts towards those achievements. Canada is proud to be among the top contributing nations in terms of sending police trainers to Haiti, and we salute our fellow Member States with whom we are working in that effort, which must continue.

While MINUSTAH is not a permanent solution for security in Haiti, we should avoid reduction scenarios that could jeopardize the results achieved to date, and take into account the role MINUSTAH should play in contributing to stability and ensuring security during significant national events, such as elections.

(*spoke in French*)

We want to ensure that MINUSTAH is the last international mission to Haiti. We urge the Haitian Government to continue to work and further build upon

it, prioritizing both the HNP and an independent and strengthened judicial sector, thus ensuring that the Haitian people can rely on the rule of law. Canada is also pleased to see recent efforts by the Minister of Justice to deal with the important issue of long-term preventive detention.

Finally, I would like to assure the Council, but, more importantly, the people of Haiti, of Canada's ongoing support and cooperation towards improving the lives of Haitians — from economic growth to access to health care to police training, among the many initiatives Canada continues to work with Haiti for a more stable, secure and prosperous future.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Belize.

Ms. Young (Belize): On behalf of the Government and the people of Belize, I thank the President and the members of the Council for continuing to place importance on the issues of Haiti's stability, progress and democracy.

Belize acknowledges the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2180 (2014) to extend the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for one year, albeit with a decision to reduce the military component by half by July.

Belize also thanks the Secretary-General for his report of 4 March (S/2015/157) on the extended mandate and expresses thanks for the briefing (see S/PV.7372) on the Council's 23 to 25 January visiting mission to Haiti, co-led by Ambassadors Samantha Power and Cristián Barros Melet. I also thank Special Representative Ms. Sandra Honoré for her briefing today.

The recent Security Council Mission to Haiti was important to assure the Haitian people and their Government that the international community is aware of the difficulties they face and that we support bona fide efforts to ensure that the Haitian people are able to benefit from free, fair and inclusive elections. With the tentative electoral calendar presented by the provisional Council for three electoral rounds between August and December 2015, Belize is of the view that to keep the momentum going, another visiting mission to Haiti should be arranged by the Security Council, to take place at least by July of this year.

Belize recognizes that a key contributing factor in the process of bolstering Haiti's stability and security has been the role played by MINUSTAH. Belize is also acutely aware of the serious costs associated with sustaining the current military level beyond March 2015. The tremendous contribution made by all those countries that supply military and police personnel is invaluable.

Yet we are concerned and are of the view that the reduction of MINUSTAH's military component should be re-examined, considering that, although the political situation in Haiti has improved slightly, actual elections are yet to take place. The elections will be complex, involving presidential, legislative and municipal seats, and mobilizing some 6.1 million voters. In addition to President Martelly's letter to the Secretary-General dated 9 March, in an interview on Monday, 16 March, with the Haitian-Caribbean News Network, the Haitian Minister in charge of the elections within the Government, Mr. Fritz Jean-Louis, said:

> "The withdrawal of United Nations troops from these regions [meaning six of the 10 electoral regions] during the elections is a big concern, not only for the Government, but also for several countries and other partners supporting the electoral process".

He went on to say:

> "It is true that we want to nationalize the election process, so that the country and its people may fully assume the responsibility of dealing with all aspects of the organization of elections. But this should be done in a way that allows us first to fill the deficiencies".

The re-examination should therefore take into consideration whether a reduced military presence is sufficient support for the Haitian National Police to be able to carry out its functions of maintaining public order and security, especially during the election process itself. After all the efforts already made, it would be a shame for the international community to drop the ball at this stage.

Belize welcomes the launch on 11 March 2015, by the United Nations, the Haitian Government and its partners, of the transitional appeal programme for the sum of $401 million, in an attempt to meet the acute and urgent needs of Haiti in 2015 and 2016. It represents a modest start: modest because it is earmarked to address issues and structural deficiencies in Haiti, manifested in displacement, the wanton spread of the cholera epidemic following its introduction into Haiti,

food insecurity and malnutrition, and weak capacity to recover from natural hazards and disasters. But it is very appreciated and will work well, along with the ongoing European Union financial assistance.

In conclusion, along with the international community, Belize supports President Martelly's efforts to strengthen the democratic process in his Caribbean Community nation of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Antigua and Barbuda.

Mr. Webson (Antigua and Barbuda): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, and your team for leading this debate. I thank the Special Representative for her very informative update and briefing this morning and for her leadership, with the Université de la Fondation Dr. Aristide, in the work in Haiti.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM believes that our active engagement and concern for Haiti is not just a demonstration of our solidarity towards a sister Caribbean nation, but also a message as to the willingness and capacity of our CARICOM community to live up to our international responsibilities.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2015/157) provides us with very incisive and useful information on the progress of the efforts of the United Nations in bringing lasting peace and stability to Haiti. CARICOM commends the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the international community for their continued efforts in stabilizing Haiti. At the same time, CARICOM wishes to pay tribute to those injured or killed in the line of duty.

CARICOM welcomes the recommendation of the Secretary-General for the extension of the mandate of MINUSTAH until 2016. We believe that stability and economic development in Haiti is linked to the wider development agenda of our subregion and to its stability and opportunity for sustainable growth.

CARICOM welcomes the plans to encourage investment, which will play a critical role in furthering social and economic development opportunities for Haiti. Nevertheless, we submit that international assistance must be aligned with Haiti's own national development interests and plans. We believe that national development must be grounded locally.

We remain optimistic that the forward momentum achieved thus far will be sustained and that all parties involved in the political process will aim to sustain such progress as has been made, and also work together to put in place the machinery for the next electoral cycle, about which we have heard much this morning.

CARICOM notes with caution that this is the third consecutive year of downsizing the Mission in Haiti. We therefore emphasize the need for a continued military presence on the ground in Haiti to be maintained. The security of Haiti and its people is paramount, particularly given the fact that at this time, as the elections approach, the drawdown of military resources introduces significant political challenges and risks, particularly as we know and have heard about the growth in the electorate in the country. It would be unfortunate if the gaps created by this downsizing compromised the gains that have been made thus far.

Nevertheless, we in CARICOM are encouraged by the performance of the Haitian National Police. We are pleased at the progress towards national security, for which the police has taken increased responsibility. We note, however, that the targets for the Haitian National Police development plan fall short, and we recognize the call made in the presentation this morning by the Special Representative.

We are further encouraged by the reduction in the levels of cholera, despite the spike about which we heard earlier today. We therefore continue to encourage international assistance in plugging the gaps in water and health infrastructure and security that may have been a cause of that increase.

While there have been a number of other positive developments in Haiti — and we welcome the continued development efforts for the Government and the people of Haiti and the Framework for the Coordination of External Aid, put in place by the Haitian Government — CARICOM remains gravely concern about the decline in international aid, especially in the area rehabilitating services in Haiti. We join the call for continued international aid to continue to support the development effort to uphold the gains made to date.

Haiti continues to experience a political, social and economic crisis; as such, the discussion at these meetings should not be whether MINUSTAH should be

concluded or by how much it should be reduced, but rather we should recognize the challenge presented and uphold the mission to expand and continue MINUSTAH, as we have heard in the appeal of the Government and the people of Haiti.

CARICOM calls upon the international community to convey by its action a message of confidence in all Haitians. This is the time for us to reinforce our readiness to lend ongoing support for Haiti's continued development. This is the time for us to lend international collaboration and continued support for the work on the ground.

In conclusion, CARICOM remains committed to working together with other partners in the international community in support of the agenda for Haitian development and the agenda of the Haitian Government and people.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mrs. Carrión (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti, which is made up of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Peru, the United States and my own country, Uruguay.

I would like to thank the President for organizing this debate to discuss the latest report (S/2015/157) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

The Group of Friends welcomes the presence of Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honore, and wants to thank her for her comprehensive briefing and for the hard work she is doing.

The strengthening of the rule of law and democratic institutions and the establishment of a political culture conducive to democratic stability and the improvement of socioeconomic conditions are key elements needed to achieve greater security, stability and prosperity in Haiti. In that regard, the Group of Friends expresses its concern about the political situation in Haiti, the continued postponement of the legislative, municipal and local elections and the fact that on 12 January the Parliament stopped functioning. The Group strongly encourages all political actors in Haiti to expand their dialogue and increase their cooperation with a view to strengthening the country's democracy. We reiterate the importance of the holding of free and transparent presidential, legislative, municipal and local elections in 2015.

The Group of Friends believes it is of the utmost importance to adhere strictly to the electoral calendar, to continue to take decisive steps towards adequately preparing for the various rounds of elections, to allocate adequate and sufficient resources for the holding of the elections, and to ensure the integrity, inclusiveness and transparency of the electoral process. In that regard, the Group of Friends calls on MINUSTAH to fully support, in accordance with Haiti's national priorities, the Haitian authorities in carrying out the electoral process until its successful completion, which will be an important step towards consolidating democracy in the country.

The Group of Friends calls on all Haitian stakeholders to engage constructively, while exercising maximum restraint and working together peacefully to maintain confidence in the electoral process. The Group of Friends welcomes the efforts carried out by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in that regard.

The Group also welcomes the efforts of the Special Representative to promote the continuation of dialogue among all the national actors in order to strengthen the ongoing political process and mitigate risk for Haiti's democratic institutions, as well as her efforts in calling on the diplomatic and international community to continue contributing in a coordinated manner to promote political dialogue.

The Group of Friends welcomes the recent Security Council mission to Haiti, which was carried out in accordance with the terms of reference set out in tghe annex to document S/2015/40, whose primary purpose was to reaffirm the continued support of the Council for the Government and the people of Haiti and to highlight the importance of achieving an inclusive and constructive atmosphere for political stability, democratic governance and development. The mission also called on all political actors to work together.

The Group of Friends recognizes that the security situation is stable, but complex. The Group notes the increase in the capacity of the Haitian National Police, but believes that the presence of MINUSTAH, including its military component, remains necessary to ensure security in Haiti. In the light of Haiti's ongoing security challenges, including those related to the upcoming elections, the Secretary-General

should closely monitor the situation on the ground and recommend to the Security Council any changes with regard to MINUSTAH's mandate and force levels he deems necessary.

The Group of Friends reiterates the importance of the Haitian Government's commitment to strengthening the rule of law and to making further progress in the judiciary and the security sectors. The Group would like to acknowledge the progress made in this area during the reporting period and the efforts aimed at strengthening key institutions and improving the capacity and increasing the professionalism of the Haitian National Police, in accordance with the 2012-2016 development plan.

The Group of Friends acknowledges the progress in the judicial sector. However, it is urgently necessary to reduce prolonged pretrial detention and to eliminate inhumane detention conditions, to ensure accountability and put an end to impunity, including for past human rights violations. The Group of Friends also urges the Ministry of Justice to continue its efforts to address the issue of prolonged pretrial detention.

In spite of the commitment shown by the Haitian authorities in engaging with international human rights mechanisms, the limited national capacity for protecting human rights remains a concern, as does the fact that the new Government no longer includes a minister-delegate on human rights and on extreme poverty. The Group of Friends welcomes the launching of by the Haitian Government of the national policy on equality between women and men.

The Group of Friends notes the continuing work by the Government of Haiti, MINUSTAH and others to protect vulnerable groups and urges all actors to give priority attention to preventing and reducing violent crime, particularly against women and children, including rape and other forms of sexual violence. The Group notes with concern the increase in the number of reported rapes in comparison with the previous reporting period, and encourages Haitian citizens to continue reporting those crimes so that the perpetrators may be brought to trial. In that regard, the Group also supports continued efforts to reduce violence and promote the well-being of at-risk youth and vulnerable communities. The Group of Friends continues to support the attention being paid to gender issues and child protection.

The Group of Friends also expresses its concern about persistent humanitarian challenges in Haiti, including the living conditions in the remaining camps for internally displaced persons. The Group of Friends welcomes the significant progress made in 2014 in the resettlement of those displaced by the 2010 earthquake.

The ongoing efforts to eradicate the cholera epidemic remind us of the importance of sustained cooperation between the international community and the Government of Haiti in order to meet the needs of the Haitian people. In that regard, the Group recalls the United Nations' two-year plan of short-term actions launched in support of the 10-year national plan for the elimination of cholera in Haiti. And it also supports the efforts of the Senior Coordinator for the Cholera Response in Haiti. Likewise, the Group of Friends acknowledges the efforts of the donor community, and calls on all donors to fulfil without delay the pledges they have made. The Group of Friends hopes that the interministerial task force will define an emergency plan to address the increase in the number of cholera cases in the last quarter of 2014. We look forward to a coordinated response to solve the problem successfully.

The Group of Friends reiterates its commitment to the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. In that regard, it reiterates its expectation that all United Nations personnel will adhere to the highest standards of conduct. The Group calls on all actors involved to assume their responsibilities in order to prevent such cases, to investigate allegations and to hold those responsible accountable.

The Group notes with concern that the International Monetary Fund has reported that a reduction in international cooperation could significantly jeopardize growth in Haiti. The Group is also concerned about the alarming levels and persistence of food insecurity in the country. It is also concerned about the limited capacity of the State to generate revenue, which has greatly affected the public budget.

The Group stresses that there can be no genuine stability or sustainable development in Haiti without strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring that democratic processes are credible. In that regard, the Group emphasizes the importance of promoting the rule of law by strengthening Haitian institutions, and further reaffirms MINUSTAH's responsibility to support the Haitian State by working towards improving the structures of governance, extending State authority and

promoting and protecting human rights in accordance with its mandate.

Finally, the Group of Friends reaffirms its solidarity with and commitment to the people and Government of Haiti as they pursue stability, reconstruction, recovery, socioeconomic development and democratic consolidation. The Group of Friends of Haiti acknowledges the important role of MINUSTAH in ensuring stability and security in Haiti, and expresses its support for and gratitude to the women and men of MINUSTAH for their dedication and tireless efforts to support recovery and stability in the country.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now once again give the floor to Ms. Honoré.

Ms. Honoré: I thank the President and all members of the Security Council for the observations that have been made and the recommendations that have been put forward with a view to bolstering the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in support of the full development of Haiti's electoral management capacity, the professionalization of the Haitian National Police, the strengthening of the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights and the role of good offices. I would like to also extend my thanks to all the other Member States, including the Republic of Haiti, as well as the multilateral organizations that have commented on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/157) that was the object of consideration by the Council at this meeting.

On behalf of all Mission personnel — military, police and civilians, both international and Haitian, as well as United Nations Volunteers — I also wish to express deep appreciation for the many statements of encouragement for the work of MINUSTAH as we pursue our efforts with the Government of Haiti and its international partners, as well as the United Nations country team, in support of and in service to the people of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Honoré for her additional comments.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 2.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7409

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7409th meeting

Thursday, 19 March 2015, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Llanos
	China	Mr. Yong Zhao
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2015/147)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-07597 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2015/147)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Lebanon to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank the Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2015/7.

The meeting rose at 10.10 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7410

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7410th meeting
Thursday, 19 March 2015, 10.15 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Llanos
	China	Mr. Yong Zhao
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2015/172)

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region (S/2015/173)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-07621 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2015/172)

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region (S/2015/173)

The President (*spoke in French*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Raymond Tshibanda N'tungamulongo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/172, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/173, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kobler.

Mr. Kobler (*spoke in French*): I would first like to congratulate France on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. It is as always an honour to appear before the Council to present the latest developments in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

In the coming days the Council will adopt a resolution that will give MONUSCO its new mandate. I thank you, Mr. President, for having given us the means to fulfil our mission, as I thank you, Sir, for also having understood and supported us in difficult times.

(*spoke in English*)

The mandate renewal consultations are a welcome opportunity to look back on what has been achieved over the past year, whether MONUSCO is still well placed to fulfil its mandate and what adjustments could be made in the year to come to work more efficiently.

First of all, I would like to thank the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in particular its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Tshibanda, with whom we have always cooperated in an open and frank spirit. MONUSCO is a temporary guest in his country, a service provider for the Congo, and at the same time a firm advocate of the values of the United Nations. In the presence of Foreign Minister Tshibanda last Saturday, I had the chance to discuss with President Kabila the current state of affairs in the country, in particular the relationship between the Government and MONUSCO. We agreed on a structured dialogue to discuss issues of concern.

I will now update the Council on four points. First, I will discuss the upcoming elections of 2015 and 2016. Secondly, I will brief the Council on the security situation in the country, including the implementation of the United Nations human rights due diligence policy. Thirdly, I will address stabilization efforts and the restitution of State authority. Fourthly, I will discuss how to return to a constructive relationship with the Government by establishing an atmosphere of trust.

My first point is the upcoming elections. I welcome the publication of the global electoral calendar on 12 February, which shall lead to the holding of presidential and legislative elections in November 2016. As demonstrations in Kinshasa, Bukavu, Goma and Lubumbashi in January have shown, the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo care about the holding of timely elections. These elections will

be a pivotal moment in the history of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

If so requested, MONUSCO is ready to support the elections logistically, technically and with its good offices. We are determined to support peaceful elections within the framework of the Constitution. In addition, the Secretary-General spoke on the constitutionality of elections at the twenty-fourth African Union summit in January.

As resolution 2147 (2014) has spelled out, all relevant parties are responsible for maintaining an environment conducive to the holding of free, fair, credible, inclusive, transparent, peaceful and timely elections, which includes a free and constructive political debate, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, equitable access to media, including State media, safety and freedom of movement for all candidates as well as for election observers, journalists, human rights defenders and actors from civil society, including women. This is what I mean when I speak of defending the values of the United Nations.

I am concerned about the arrest of several dozen civil society actors the other day. Political space for civil society is a prerequisite for credible elections.

Coming to my second point, security, when the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) arrived in the country some 15 years ago, the country was socially, economically and politically shattered. When MONUC arrived, the country was at civil war. Today, the country is unified. There is a clear, shared and celebrated Congolese identity. It is no longer at war, nor is it in transition. It is a proud nation.

Over this period, the Congolese Government has striven to restore security to its people. It has succeeded in freeing much of the territory from the terror of armed groups. The presence of armed groups is limited to the eastern provinces of the country today. However, the overall security situation is still not stable, nor is whatever stability there is irreversible. Many still live in fear of rape, of attack, of being robbed of already meagre possessions. This fear affects nearly every aspect of daily life in the east — fear to walk to school, fear to go to the market, fear to tend to the fields.

With more security in more places, the time will come for MONUSCO to begin its gradual drawdown. MONUSCO will not stay in the Democratic Republic of the Congo forever; we look forward to the day when it can leave the country, with continuing development support transferred to our colleagues in the United Nations country team. Yes, the Congo has more security than before. Yes, it is on the way to stability. However, more must be done to reduce the threat from armed groups and violence against civilians to a level that can be effectively managed by Congolese institutions. More must also be done to achieve stability by establishing functional, professional and accountable State institutions and strengthening democratic practices. The drawdown should be aligned with progress in those areas. Any exit by MONUSCO should be gradual, progressive and tied to specific targets to be jointly developed by it and the Government. We should therefore aim to consolidate peace and leave behind a peaceful Congo on the path to prosperity.

In the area dominated by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the terrorist attacks — torture, mutilations, beheadings — have been reduced. Recently, in and around Beni, almost 300 people, including women and children, even toddlers, were mutilated as they died in terrorist attacks. As I speak to the Council now, the ADF rebels, hiding in the jungles of Kamango, are being pursued by brave soldiers of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC), supported by MONUSCO. They have eaten together, lived together and fought together to protect Congolese families. Our combined efforts against the ADF, like the operations against the Mouvement du 23 mars two years ago, have forged a bond between the FARDC and MONUSCO soldiers. Their cooperation was truly an example of best practices, and demonstrated that when we are united we are strong. I hope it will remain so in future.

The greatest threat to peace and security in the Great Lakes region still remains the Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda (FDLR). That is why the Council mandated MONUSCO to support the Government in neutralizing it, a mandate that we should be executing in support of the FARDC. We should not be divided on it. Our operations were jointly planned. We worked with the commanding generals for months in an excellent and constructive partnership. They were, however, replaced by officers who had formerly commanded units with a credible history of human rights violations. We were therefore compelled to suspend our support to the operations under their command.

All other fields of operations — against the ADF, the Forces de resistance patriotiques de l'Ituri and the FDLR in South Kivu — can continue with our support, in full accordance with the human rights due-diligence policy. The decision to suspend support was based on indisputable values enshrined in the protection of human rights. We want to support the fight against the FDLR and also to implement our human rights policy. We do not want to choose between fighting the FDLR and upholding human rights. We owe that to the people of Democratic Republic of the Congo and to ourselves. Safeguarding human rights is fundamental and cannot be compromised. We are guided by that clear compass. And if I may speak personally, I am proud to work for the United Nations and its Secretary-General, with his clear Human Rights up Front policy. I know — and President Kabila himself has confirmed it to me — that the Congolese Government shares the same zero-tolerance policy regarding human-rights violations. I am confident that it will take appropriate measures to remedy this unfortunate situation. However, to avoid any potential misunderstanding, I should say that MONUSCO is fully committed to fighting the FDLR. It is also committed to respecting the human rights due-diligence policy.

There is no purely military solution to the problem of the FDLR. It must be followed by effective non-military initiatives, including a well-functioning demobilization and repatriation process and effective extension of State authority, if we want to have sustainable solutions. In that regard, I still cannot be satisfied with progress so far. Surrendered FDLR elements are still in the camps of Kanyabayonga, Walungu and Kisangani, where they maintain an intact and functioning military structure. A few FDLR combatants have disarmed, yes, but even their demobilization has not started yet, let alone their repatriation.

I now turn to my third point, the stabilization and restitution of State authority. For peace to be sustainable, we need more than military action. Understanding and addressing the root causes of the conflict is essential to disrupting persistent cycles of violence. I would like to update the Council on recent developments. MONUSCO has recently created an natural-resources crime task force with the United Nations Environment Programme and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region. In addition to helping to safeguard the natural wealth of the country for future generations, the Mission, within the limits of its mandate, will explore ways to contribute to addressing the underpinnings of conflict in Congo.

We are no longer dealing only with armed groups, but also with well-organized criminal gangs. The exploitation of natural resources in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is valued at more than $1 billion per year. Part of it is illegally smuggled out of the country, and an estimated 98 per cent of the net profits from the illegal exploitation of natural resources, mainly gold, charcoal and timber, goes to transnational organized criminal networks. Rebel groups retain only 2 per cent of the profits from illegal smuggling. How many hospitals could be built if illegal trade became legal? How many kilometres of roadways rehabilitated? How many teachers paid? The objective is clear — gold should be turned into taxes, taxes into schools and schools into a prosperous future.

(*spoke in French*)

I would like to end with a fourth point, and here I will also direct my comments to His Excellency Mr. Raymond Tshibanda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 15 February, President Joseph Kabila expressed his opinions about MONUSCO's actions and results. If we are to achieve better cooperation, we must create an atmosphere of trust. We should not forget that the Government and MONUSCO are on the same page when it comes to our goals — the well-being of the people, the end of violence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and also the Mission's departure. We are here to serve the people, and we are therefore also here to provide our services to the Government. Our willingness to leave the country is real and unequivocal, and we know the Government desires it too. MONUSCO's departure must be tied to results and concrete improvement of the situation on the ground. Until then, we need to start finding concrete ways to improve the situation and relations right now. I therefore propose to the Government that we reset cooperation on a basis of mutual trust.

Finally, as always, I should commend those of my colleagues who have recently distinguished themselves. I would like to pay tribute to all the officers of MONUSCO and UNICEF's child protection sections. Every day, hand-in-hand with the FARDC, they free children from the armed groups' grasp. More than 1,000 were liberated in 2014. In the first three months of 2015, more than 160 child soldiers have managed to

escape the FDLR and find refuge with MONUSCO. That is a true success story.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Security Council for the support it has always given us.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Kobler for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Djinnit.

Mr. Djinnit (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to present the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region (S/2015/173). I am pleased to do so under the presidency of France, whose support and contributions to achieving the aims of the Framework Agreement, together with those of the other members of the Council, I welcome.

Two years on from the signing of the Framework Agreement in Addis Ababa, which breathed new life into efforts seeking to stabilize the Democratic Republic of the Congo and lay the groundwork for regional cooperation, the region remains at a crossroads. The crises that have broken out in the Central African Republic and South Sudan serve to remind us that the region as a whole remains vulnerable to factors of instability. Despite the significant progress made in establishing an atmosphere of peace and security, major challenges remain to be overcome in order to achieve the objectives of the Framework Agreement.

Those include, first, the neutralization of the armed groups operating in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. These negative forces continue to commit violence against the civilian population, particularly against women and children, to illegally exploit natural resources and to fuel a climate of mistrust among the countries of the region. Since taking office, I have made it a priority to mobilize the countries of the region and other stakeholders around that goal. I have encouraged the military operations conducted by the Forces armees de la République démocratique du Congo against the Allied Democratic Forces with the support of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and I went to Beni with my colleague Martin Kobler and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Mr. Boubacar Diarra, to encourage collaboration.

My Office has also worked together with the stakeholders to implement the Nairobi declarations, including for the repatriation of the former combatants of the Mouvement du 23 mars (M-23) from Rwanda and Uganda. To date, a small number of them have agreed to return to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as part of the repatriation plan agreed with Uganda, while the repatriation process has yet to commence with Rwanda in follow-up to the visit of the delegation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Kigali in February. Everything must be done to turn the page definitively on the chapter of the M-23 rebellion so that all energies can be focused on the other negative forces.

At the same time, I joined in efforts encouraging the launching of military action against the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) following the passing of the deadline of 2 January 2015. I took part in the series of consultations organized by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) towards the end of last year. I welcome the consensus that eventually emerged on this sensitive issue. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its armed forces on the military operations they launched against the FDLR. I encourage once again the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO to resume their full cooperation in the framework of operations against the FDLR and to strengthen their partnership through a structured strategic dialogue. During my meeting with President Kabila on 13 March, he assured assured me of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's readiness for such dialogue.

Secondly, in my various interactions in the region, I encouraged efforts and called for initiatives aiming to improve relations among the countries of the region with a view to resolving misunderstandings and suspicions and building the level of trust needed for progress in the Framework Agreement process. I want to thank President Dos Santos, in his capacity as Chairman of the ICGLR, and other leaders of the region for their commitment in that regard. I reiterate my readiness to support these efforts at reconciliation among States so as to promote a climate that is more conducive to cooperation. In that context, I welcome the intention of President Kabila to convene a summit of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries.

Finally, aware that the region was embarking on an election cycle that would be crucial for strengthening democracy and stability, I sought, in liaison with my United Nations colleagues in the region and the group of Special Envoys, to provide my contribution to efforts aimed at encouraging the holding of inclusive, transparent and peaceful elections. We will continue to make efforts to help the countries of the region to make of those elections opportunities to strengthen their democratic achievements and stability, in accordance with the spirit of the Framework Agreement.

Beyond those crucial actions, we must tackle the other underlying causes of the instability in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, as per our commitments under the Addis Ababa Framework Agreement. To that end, in liaison with the ICGLR and all stakeholders, my Office will contribute to the initiatives — already under way or planned — in order to create conditions conducive to the return of refugees, reconciliation among local communities and lasting solutions to the complex issues of citizenship and land. That area of work and others, such as the fight against the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the promotion of regional judicial cooperation, are among the priority actions of my road map.

In terms of economic development, I am pleased to note the many development and cooperation initiatives launched in recent years, in particular the various regional development corridors. My Office is working to support those commendable efforts, including by organizing this coming July — in collaboration with the World Bank, the European Union and the African Union — a conference for partners focusing on regional development issues in the Great Lakes region. Moreover, following the regional consultations held in Luanda in December 2014, which endorsed the investment opportunities document, my Office and the ICGLR, with the support of other partners, began making preparations for the conference on private sector investment in the Great Lakes region, to be held in Kinshasa in the last quarter of 2015. That first conference of its kind aims to promote investment and job-creation opportunities, strengthen public-private partnerships and create a platform for exchange among investors. The conference will enhance the prospects for peace through investment opportunities in the region.

The participation of civil society and women's organizations in efforts aiming to end instability and facilitate the implementation of the Framework Agreement is essential. In that regard, efforts are under way to establish a regional coalition of civil society, with the joint support of my Office and ICGLR Executive Secretariat. We are likewise working closely with the ICGLR to strengthen initiatives in favour of women that contribute to peace in the Great Lakes region. In that respect, the Women's Platform for the Framework Agreement, launched by Mary Robinson, continues, under my auspices, to support the political and economic empowerment of women, including through the financing of socioeconomic activities. I am pleased to inform the Council that the first round of grants from a special trust fund established by my Office to support the Women's Platform was awarded in November 2014 for women's organizations from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. I want to thank the Governments of the Netherlands, Ireland and Norway, which contributed to my Office's special trust fund.

(spoke in English)

In conclusion, let me say a few words on the governance structures and monitoring mechanisms of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. The current regional context calls for the strengthening of these structures and mechanisms in order to maintain momentum to effectively deliver national, regional and international commitments through proactive engagement within the Regional Oversight Mechanism and an enhanced role for the Technical Support Committee. In the weeks ahead, I will consult with the leadership of the African Union and the other co-guarantors of the Framework Agreement, the ICGLR and SADC, on the best ways to improve the Framework's governance structures and monitoring mechanisms.

Let me also put on record my appreciation for the cooperation I am receiving from the signatory countries and the excellent collaboration developed with my colleagues in the region, especially Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kobler and Special Envoy Uteem, as well as the United Nations system in the Great Lakes region. I wish to express my appreciation for the good cooperation we have forged with the African Union, as the co-promoter of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework process, and the other co-guarantors of the agreement — ICGLR and SADC. I would like to also thank my fellow Special Envoys, including Russ Feingold, who recently left his

position after 18 months of brilliant service, for their support and contribution.

Sustaining the momentum of the Framework agreement lies in the continued commitment of the signatory countries and concerned stakeholders. I wish, in this regard, to continue to count on the continued engagement and support of the Council. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region have made considerable progress in overcoming the tragedies of the past, but they have yet to achieve irreversible progress for lasting peace. I reiterate my commitment to working tirelessly and joining hands with regional and other stakeholders towards delivering the promises of the Framework agreement and assisting the region in fulfilling its aspirations for shared peace and prosperity.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Djinnit for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Tshibanda N'tungamulongo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month of March, and to tell you how honoured we are to see France, a friendly country, guiding the Council's deliberations today. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak before the Council at this meeting on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, an issue that is of paramount importance to my country.

Allow me to take this opportunity to express once again to the Council the gratitude of the people and Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the efforts undertaken by the United Nations in order to maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity our country and to guarantee its peace and stability. Finally, I would like to pay a heartfelt tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the tireless concern he has always demonstrated and for his personal involvement in seeking and consolidating peace in my country.

Relations between the United Nations and the Democratic Republic of the Congo go back to when my country gained international sovereignty nearly 55 years ago, since when the United Nations and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have achieved so many memorable things together. We are convinced that history will show this much better than we are able to do in just a few minutes today. These relations have almost always been good, often excellent, if not exemplary. Unfortunately, today we must recognize that they are going through some difficulties. Our greatest wish is that this difficult period should pass as quickly as possible. The history of our country and our common political will do not allow us to take any path other than that of conciliation.

How could we not be convinced of this when we know that it is specifically due to the partnership between the United Nations and the Democratic Republic of the Congo that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of my country have been safeguarded, in spite of all the covetousness and aggressions, be they direct or by proxy? We see that peace, which is often interrupted, has each time been re-established and then consolidated, both in my country and throughout the African Great Lakes region. We see each day a greater consolidation of the State's authority and respect for human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while free elections, the guarantors of strong and credible institutions, are closer to becoming a reality each day as the only way to access and preserve public authority in my country. All the while, the United Nations has reminded Member States of their obligations under the terms of its Charter, including full respect for democratic principles and the sanctity of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

We believe that in order to consolidate these gains, we, the United Nations and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have the duty to continue to work as a team and, to that end, to perpetuate the spirit that has always characterized this partnership and been a key factor of its effectiveness. It is a spirit of dialogue and mutual respect, in accordance with the principles of the Charter, including respect at all times and in all circumstances of the intangible sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For its part, the Democratic Republic of the Congo affirms loud and clear it has always been and will always remain true to that spirit.

There are four current sticking points in the relations between the United Nations and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They are, first, the strategic review and the logical consequences following therefrom, especially with regard to the transfer of responsibilities from the United Nations Organization

Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the pace of the drawdown of United Nations troops in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; secondly, the forced disarmament of the Rwandan rebels of the Forces democratiques de liberation du Rwanda (FDLR); thirdly, the development of the presence of Ugandan rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces — National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU) in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and, fourthly, the political consequences of the end of the Mouvement du 23 mars (M-23) rebellion.

In order to inform Council members, please allow me to clarify the viewpoint of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on these points in view of recent developments in the security, political and economic situations in the field. I note that the current situation on the ground is improving daily. In terms of the strategic review, I recall that the Organization has been present in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, at our request, since 1999, first in the form of a peacekeeping mission and then as a stabilization mission. It has deployed there and maintains about 20,000 troops, including 3,000 of the Force Intervention Brigade, which is specifically charged with supporting the Forces armees de la République democratique du Congo (FARDC) in neutralizing the negative forces in the east of the country. We would also like to recall that, since the very beginning, it has been agreed that the United Nations contribution would be progressively reviewed in view of a reduction as and when the security threats were diminished and the FARDC achieved a level of performance that enabled it to ensure the country's security themselves.

When the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo arrived, almost half of the country was living in insecurity and was outside the effective control of the national authorities. The country was divided into as many semi-autonomous territories, administrations and armies as there were rebel groups. Given the almost complete disintegration of the State, the massive violations of human rights — in particular the recruitment of child soldiers, rape and other sexual violence — had reached a level that shocked the human conscience.

Today, there are certainly still some pockets of insecurity maintained by the Ugandan terrorists in and around the town of Beni and North Kivu ar[illegible] Rwandan rebels of the FDLR in certain small are[illegible] North Kivu and South Kivu. However, everywhere else in the country peace and security reign, including in Ituri and to the north of Katanga. The few incidents of disorder that have sporadically caused concern for citizens, brought about by the activism of some lost sheep, are law-and-order issues that have been brought into line in one way or another.

Moreover, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo today there is a functioning State whose authority is effectively exercised throughout almost all the national territory. There are legitimate and effective institutions, as evidenced by our economic performance, which includes a 9.5 per cent growth in our gross domestic product in 2014, which, in the opinion of credible institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, could reach 10 per cent in 2015; an inflation rate close to zero; a stable exchange rate for the national currency; steadily increasing international reserves and foreign direct investment; the implementation of several important reforms, as a result of which the country has been ranked one of the top 10 reformer countries in the world by the World Bank; and the rehabilitation and construction, in less than 5 years, of more schools, hospitals and kilometres of roads than over the previous 50 years.

There is an army that is actively being rebuilt and whose continued increase in power is unquestionable. The defeat of the M-23, the almost complete neutralization of ADF-NALU and the ongoing military operations against the FDLR are just some of the irrefutable pieces of evidence to that effect. Democracy is being established, with the first truly free and democratic elections in our history held in 2006, legislative and presidential elections held on time in 2011, the effective implementation of measures for decentralization and local, municipal, urban, provincial, senatorial, parliamentary and presidential elections planned to be held in 2015 and 2016.

In view of this non-exhaustive list, any objective observer must acknowledge that enormous work has been done. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is grateful to the United Nations for its invaluable support in the pursuit and achievement of those results. However, it also believes that the time has come for it to fully shoulder its responsibilities with respect to its security and that of its people. It therefore calls for the Council to respond to this legitimate aspiration, which is inseparable from the very notion of national sovereignty.

In that regard, I wish to bring to the attention of Council members the considerable efforts made by my Government in terms of security sector reform. Those efforts extend beyond officially defining a military doctrine; developing a comprehensive reform plan; Parliament adopting and the Head of State promulgating all laws required for the army and national police; appointing to command positions, in line with the new architecture of both elements; and creating a quick reaction force, which the Council wants and expects and is already well under way.

It is in that context that one must view the training and equiping of the following three brigades: the 11th Brigade, which is famous for its victorious operations against M-23 rebels and the ADF, under the command of the late General Mamadou Ndala. That Brigade is made up of three battalions that were trained under a Chinese cooperation programme; the 21st Brigade, which is made up of three battalions trained by South Africa and currently deployed in Katanga; and the 31st Brigade, which is made up of three battalions and whose soldiers were trained under a Belgian cooperation programme, served in earlier pacification operations in North Kivu and will soon be deployed as part of the efforts to pursue the FDLR in the Congolese forest.

In terms of the implementation of resolution 2147 (2014), on the forced disarmament of Rwandan FDLR rebels, I would start by deploring the incident that caused MONUSCO to not participate directly in that disarmament, even though that was among the tasks that our Organization was to accomplish in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On this subject, I would like to state that this situation did not arise because of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which did nothing but note MONUSCO's decision to suspend its support. What is more, the Congolese authorities were not informed, before their nomination to their posts, of the fact that the officers in question were designated "red" by the MONUSCO service.

I would like to further state that our country is involved in all United Nations efforts for the promotion and respect of human rights, so that is not at issue here. Eloquent proof of that is the fact that at least a third of the population in prisons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is made up of elements from the defence and security forces, officers and enlisted men alike. That would not have been the case if we had been complacent about them. That said, like any United Nations Member State and in accordance with the Charter, the Democratic Republic of the Congo wants to maintain full autonomy in appointing its civilian and military cadres. Only obstacles that have actually been documented can, in full sovereignty, be taken into account when appointments are made.

Despite MONUSCO's withdrawal of support, and as it cannot shirk its responsibilities, the FARDC has launched and is currently carrying out military operations against the FDLR. To date, significant progress has been made. Almost 200 combatants — including, unfortunately, 91 child soldiers — have been arrested or have given themselves up. Former strongholds such as Mulenge, Kitoga, Kigogo, Kangova and Kashindaba in South Kivu, and Kahumbu, Katemba, Kisoro and Mulembe in North Kivu have been liberated. The remaining rebel troops have plunged into the deep forest, thus getting further from the Rwandan border, where they sought to create insecurity in that neighbouring country. Our troops are hot on their heels, and our determination to eradicate that harmful force is such that we will not cease operations until we achieve that final result, whatever the cost in time and resources, whether human, financial or material.

Regarding the evolution of the presence of Ugandan ADF-NALU rebels in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would like to state that MONUSCO and FARDC have cooperated positively since the rebels scattered and became lawless terrorists with no other strategy than surprise attacks on isolated villages, where they burn down huts and decapitate their inhabitants before fleeing. We are currently in the search stage. Everyone recognizes that Congolese troops behave so as to bring honour to our country in those operations.

I now come to the subject of the elimination of the M-23 rebellion. That rebellion came to an end under the Addis Ababa Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region and the conclusions of the Nairobi talks. In accordance with the Framework agreement and the conclusions of Nairobi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has begun a process of political dialogue through national consultations and has, in this respect and following those consultations, declared amnesty for acts of war, in particular those committed by former M-23 rebels. Indeed, of the 1,678 former rebels who are on the run and have taken refuge in Uganda and the 453 other refugees in Rwanda, 777 have at this stage

taken advantage of the amnesty law and 182 of those have voluntarily returned to the country. Those who remain in the two neighbouring countries are not there because the Democratic Republic of the Congo will not receive them or has not facilitated that process enough, but rather because, as this repatriation is voluntary, that decision must be made by the former M-23 combatants themselves. Some of them, at this point, seem to prefer to stay where they are. We are actively seeking to convince them to return to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we are counting on the international community, and in particular the special envoys, to help us achieve that.

To give the full picture of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would like to reiterate my Government's determination to adhere more strongly than ever to the culture of democracy. Therefore, after an open and rich debate, the national independent electoral commission published a comprehensive timetable for the upcoming elections. At the same time, it set the budget necessary to hold all elections in the election cycle. This demonstrates our commitment to holding transparent, credible and peaceful elections. We are confident that the friends of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will support us in this exercise in learning and deepening of democracy in a climate of peace by avoiding any interference that could add fuel to the fire. Their financial support — offered in a timely manner and not at the last minute — will contribute equally to that end.

In conclusion, we are ready to launch a strategic dialogue with the United Nations on all the issues I have raised today, with a view to achieving consensus before the Council makes its decision. I wish to reiterate that the FARDC's current high level of performance offers an objective demonstration of our desire to negotiate the gradual reduction of MONUSCO troops. We know that our concept for this drawdown is shared by the Organization and that it is only its scope and pace that are up for discussion. We are convinced that when we return on Monday, as scheduled, we will undoubtedly be able to reach agreement and offer a consensual proposal to the Council.

Finally, I reaffirm that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has always enjoyed exemplary cooperation with the United Nations and that it shall continue to do so. We count on the United Nations to do its share to that end.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Minister Tshibanda N'tungamulongo for his statement.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7411

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7411th meeting
Sunday, 22 March 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Olguin Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaite
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Qatar and Yemen to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Yemen, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Benomar, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Doha.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mr. Benomar.

Mr. Benomar: At my last briefing earlier this month , the Security Council requested that I report on the implementation of resolution 2201 (2015), which was adopted unanimously on 15 February. I had reported, regrettably, that many of the Council's demands had gone unmet. The one new and positive development I have to report is the release from house arrest of Prime Minister Bahah and four cabinet ministers.

We as the United Nations stand for the peaceful resolution of conflict through negotiated political settlements. Furthermore, the Security Council has entrusted to me the mandate of facilitating inclusive negotiations in order to reach a consensus solution in accordance with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference, and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement and its security annex. As such, I have reiterated time and again to all sides that such a solution is the key to unlocking the prevailing political impasse. As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This is why, for many weeks now, and taking serious risks in precarious security circumstances, I have continued meeting with the 12 political parties, including the Houthis. I have also been in close contact with President Hadi, including through two visits to Aden. I am working with all sides in the hope of resolving the current standoff and to avert civil war in order to get the political transition back on track.

Nevertheless, the events of recent weeks and days seem to be leading Yemen yet farther from a peaceful settlement and towards the edge of civil war. Since President Hadi arrived in Aden, he has declared Aden as Yemen's temporary capital; started expanding the so-called popular committees loyal to him, which have now taken control of Aden; and accused former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and the Houthis of launching a coup against him. The Houthis, in turn have rejected President Hadi as the legitimate leader of Yemen, and have continued to occupy Government institutions and to expand into other territories, despite the Security Council's repeated demands.

In early March, President Hadi took a decision to replace the Central Security Forces (CSF) chief in Aden, who is alleged to be loyal to former president Saleh and the Houthis, with a replacement who was seen as a controversial choice. However, the CSF chief refused to cede the post, leading to several rounds of fighting between his troops and military units against the popular committees loyal to President Hadi.

The stage was then set for what transpired next. On 19 March, heavy clashes took place between the Central Security Forces and the popular committees in and around Aden international airport. In a dramatic move, Air force jets from Sana'a were deployed to Aden and dropped bombs on Al-Maasheeq, the presidential compound. Fortunately, the President was not injured and moved to a secure location. Air force jets have reportedly continued flying over Aden since the attack. Consistent with the Security Council press statement of 20 March (SC/11826), I also condemn the attack on the airport and the airstrikes, which constitutes an unprecedented and dangerous escalation.

On 20 March, terrorists in Sana'a detonated explosives at two mosques, killing as many as 140 people and wounding over 350, which I also condemn strongly, and I offer my condolences to the families of the victims. The next day, the so-called popular committees seized a key military installation in Lahj, in the south, displacing troops. In response, the Houthi Revolutionary Committee issued a call for all military units in the North to mobilize in preparation for a campaign in the South.

On 21 and 22 March, Houthi militias, backed by units of the Yemeni army, appeared in rising numbers in Taiz, a northern industrial hub in the south-east and the gateway into Aden. Earlier today, it was reported that the Houthis have seized control of Taiz airport and other parts of the city. Also in Taiz, soldiers reportedly dispersed protesters using tear gas and live ammunition. As in Taiz, anti-Houthi demonstrations have taken place Sana'a and other cities. I am extremely concerned about the use of arbitrary arrest and detention, abduction and violence, and call for the human rights of peaceful protesters and journalists to be respected fully.

It would appear that the Houthis, backed by members of the Yemeni armed forces, are now moving further south, towards both Lahj and Aden. There is a prevailing sense among Yemenis that the situation is on a rapid downward spiral. Many are also concerned that the conflict is taking on worrying sectarian tones and deepening north-south divisions. Fears exist that Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula will exploit the current instability to cause further chaos. Following the suicide bombings and fighting, emotions are running extremely high, and unless a solution can be found in the coming days, the country will slide into further violent conflict and fragmentation.

I have been engaged with all sides to call for restraint and to de-escalate the situation. Some have questioned the utility of our presence in Sana'a and continuing the United Nations-facilitated negotiations against the backdrop of the new developments. This leads me to repeat the question: What alternative do we have? It would be an illusion to think that the Houthis could mount an offensive and succeed in taking control of the entire country, including Mareb, Taiz and the south. It would be equally false to think that President Hadi could assemble sufficient forces to liberate the country from the Houthis. Any side that would want to push the country in either direction would be inviting a protracted conflict in the vein of a combined Iraq-Libya-Syria scenario.

There are extremists on many sides who would like these negotiations to fail and who have been actively trying to undermine them. I should reiterate that peaceful dialogue is the only option we have. As mediator, I must protect the integrity of the negotiations. I must have the space to engage in dialogue with all parties, including those responsible for using force to disrupt the political transition. We have been able to play a constructive role so far because the United Nations has engaged with all parties on an impartial basis, in the belief that it is in Yemen's best interests that we do so.

A final power-sharing deal to enable the transition to be completed can materialize only if we engage all sides in the political process, including the Houthis and President Hadi. Both are now crucial to the solution. The United Nations continues to engage with all the parties in a manner that neither legitimizes those who have used force to disrupt the political process, diminishes the legitimacy of the President and Government or harms the impartiality of the United Nations.

I have just concluded my second visit in 10 days to Riyadh. I thank the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for the assistance that has been offered to the victims of the recent violence in Yemen. I have also had consultations with the Government of Qatar in its capacity as GCC Chair, as well as with Mr. Abdullatif Al-Zayani, Secretary General of the GCC. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the GCC have played a major role in supporting the Yemeni people over the years. I am confident that the Security Council, the GCC and the United Nations will continue to work closely together to help the Yemenis put their transition back on track.

In conclusion, I urge all sides, in this time of rising tensions and inflammatory rhetoric, to appreciate the gravity of the situation and to de-escalate by exercising maximum restraint, ceasing all hostilities and refraining from provocation or using violence to achieve political goals. Peaceful dialogue is the only way forward.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Benomar for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to express our sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting of the Security Council in order to bring us up to speed on the fast-developing events in Yemen that have followed the aggression on Thursday against the city of Aden and the presidential compound of Al-Maasheeq, in the context of the ongoing coup that began on 21 September 2014 with the Houthis' occupation of the capital, Sana'a. The entire population of Yemen deplores and rejects the coup, which is helping to fuel civil war and sectarian infighting. This violent scenario has continued with the insane acts of terrorism committed by unseen hands in Sana'a on Friday at the Al-Badr and Al-Hashoosh

mosques, in which dozens died, leaving a deep scar on Yemen.

In the gradual Yemeni political transition — which is a model for such transitions and for peaceful change, under the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and its Implementation Mechanism, for which we thank our brothers in the GCC, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and which are designed to enable Yemen to emerge from its problems and build a modern federal State — all that there remained to do was to adopt the Constitution and convene presidential and parliamentary elections in a specific time frame so that our people could overcome their suffering and build a State based on the rule of law, justice, equal citizenship and good governance. The Peace and National Partnership Agreement permits no one to act selfishly, unilaterally or autocratically, or to use force to achieve political gains at the expense of the people's aspirations and interests.

The only way for our country to emerge from the current crisis is to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions regarding the situation in my country, most recently resolution 2201 (2015), which calls on Ansar Allah to abandon its coup of the constitutional legislature. As the President of Yemen said yesterday, that would involve withdrawing all the committees that have been imposed on ministries and Government institutions, as well as all the armed elements in Sana'a and other cities of Yemen; returning to the official military all the light, medium and heavy weaponry that has been plundered and seized from the armed forces units and security camps; working to comply with all relevant Security Council resolutions and abandoning any measures adopted since 21 September; and beginning to immediately implement the main points of the road map for the political process, particularly the Gulf Initiative and the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference agreed to by the United Nations and the 10 States sponsoring the Initiative, and establishing a specific timetable for that implementation.

I appeal to the Council, and to every representative of States that enjoy ties of friendship to our people, to fulfil their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to take urgent measures to halt the progression of aggression and violence that is undermining the legitimate authorities, partitioning Yemen and attacking its security and its political settlement, since the criminal acts of the Houthi militias and their allies threaten peace and security not only in Yemen but also regionally and internationally.

The Council's ongoing support for the constitutional legitimacy embodied in President Hadi Mansour and the unity and security of Yemen is reflected in the many resolutions it has adopted on this issue, including resolutions 2014 (2011), 2051 (2012), 2140 (2014), 2201 (2015) and 2204 (2015), as well as the relevant presidential statements. I would therefore urge the Council to silence the drums of war being beaten by the promoters of the coup, as well as the sedition they seek to fuel in my country, which is incited by Iran's ambition there.

I stress the President's call on all Yemeni political elements, which has been welcomed by our brothers in the GCC, to grasp the gravity of the current situation and to participate effectively in the GCC dialogue being held in Riyadh in order to find a solution that would avert Yemen's descent into civil strife, partition and violence. We support the Secretary-General's efforts with respect to Yemen, and hope that the Council will support them in the presidential statement it is to adopt momentarily.

In conclusion, I extend my thanks and appreciation to all our brothers in the GCC States, in particular the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for their political, financial and security-related support for our people at all stages of the crisis. I wish also to thank all State sponsors of the Gulf initiatives, as well as the members of the Security Council, the international community, the United Nations, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the League of Arab States and all brotherly Arab States, particularly Egypt and Jordan, for their unwavering support for our people. The Yemeni people will never forget the resolve and support that have been offered to us, and we urge all involved to continue supporting the peaceful political transition in my country and not to abandon Yemen in these difficult humanitarian, economic and political circumstances.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar and the State of Kuwait — I thank you, Sir, for convening this emergency meeting to discuss the dangerous events that continue to rage

in Yemen. I also thank Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, for his efforts.

The GCC reaffirms its full support for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen and for the legitimacy of President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour. We reject all ongoing unilateral actions taken by the Houthis. We reiterate the GCC's readiness to support the security and stability of Yemen, preserve its constitutional legitimacy and reject all attempts to undermine it in order to restore Yemen's security and establish conditions conducive to a resumption of the political process pursuant to the GCC Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism. We hope that Yemen will not become a headquarters of terrorist organizations.

Since the adoption of resolution 2201 (2015) on 15 February, the Houthis have continued to take dangerous unilateral actions in an attempt to exacerbate the situation and to undermine stability in Yemen and the political transition there. These measures are blatant violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2201 (2015). The Houthis continue to commit their atrocities and have failed to withdraw their forces from State facilities and to release Government officials from detention. They continue to take measures that are the sole prerogative of the legitimate Government, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. They have dismissed all decisions adopted by the international community, instead of striving to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions and to maintain the unity of Yemen. They have bombed the presidential palace in an escalation that can only further exacerbate the situation at all levels.

At a time when the Security Council is assessing the outcomes of its own resolutions, the Houthis and their supporters continue to move to take control of the city of Taiz — an escalation intended to challenge the resolve of the international community. They are consolidating their control of Yemen without considering the consequences of their actions on the country's stability and security. In the light of their atrocities and violations, we call on the Security Council to take practical and urgent measures to ensure that its resolutions are implemented and to maintain international peace and security by adopting decisions under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which will thwart those who violate its resolutions and prevent weapons from falling into the hands of the rebel groups.

We are deeply alarmed by the deterioration of the current security situation, including an upsurge in the activities of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, which facilitate the spread of the ideologies of extremism, terrorism and violence. The increasing terrorist attacks in Yemen, including the bombing of mosques in Sana'a and Sa'dah, have been strongly condemned by the GCC, given their worrisome impact on the security and stability of Yemen and the region.

Confirming the GCC's efforts in support of the security and stability of Yemen and its understanding that these can be restored only through serious dialogue among all sectors of the population, the GCC leaders have responded to the plea sent by the President of Yemen to His Majesty King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia to convene a conference on Yemen under the auspices of the GCC secretariat in Riyadh, to which all Yemeni parties are invited. We reiterate our invitation to all Yemeni groups to participate in the conference, and hope that our Yemeni brethren shall prioritize the interests of their country and accept the invitation. They will enjoy all possible support of the GCC at all levels, because the security of Yemen is directly linked to that of the GCC.

Throughout every crisis in Yemen, the GCC has always sought to lend a hand to our Yemeni brethren, with whom we have always shared and will always share the responsibility to ensure the security and stability of the region. This will not happen without ongoing cooperation among the countries of the region to ensure mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

The current dangerous situation in Yemen will require hard work on our part to prevent Yemen's descent into even deeper peril, enhanced international efforts and efforts on the part of the international community to take its responsibilities seriously. We reiterate our commitment to supporting the aspirations of the Yemeni people and maintaining regional peace and security and the unity of Yemen, which are top priorities of the Gulf Cooperation Council. As we have said, Yemen's security and stability are directly related to the national security of GCC members, and we will take all measures necessary to protect Yemen's security, stability and vital interests.

The President (*spoke in French*): After consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council recalls its resolutions 2014 (2011), 2051 (2012), 2140 (2014), 2201 (2015), and 2204 (2015) and presidential statements of 15 February 2013 and 29 August 2014.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen, and its commitment to stand by the people of Yemen.

"The Security Council reiterates its support for the efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council and commends its engagement in assisting the political transition in Yemen.

"The Security Council supports the legitimacy of the President of Yemen, Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, and calls upon all parties and Member States to refrain from taking any actions that undermine the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen, and the legitimacy of the President of Yemen.

"The Security Council reaffirms its full support for, and commitment to, the efforts of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, Mr. Jamal Benomar, and to the United Nations-brokered negotiations.

"The Security Council condemns the ongoing unilateral actions taken by the Houthis, which undermine the political transition process in Yemen, and jeopardize the security, stability, sovereignty and unity of Yemen and expresses deep concern about the insufficient implementation of resolution 2201 (2015).

"The Security Council deplores that the Houthis have not implemented its demands in resolution 2201 (2015) to withdraw their forces from government institutions, including in the capital, Sana'a, and normalize the security situation in the capital and other provinces, and relinquish government and security institutions.

"The Security Council expresses serious concern over continued arbitrary detentions by all parties, in particular by Houthis, contrary to resolution 2201 (2015), and reiterates its demand for the unconditional and safe release of all persons arbitrarily detained.

"The Security Council welcomes that the Prime Minister Khaled Bahah and other members of the Cabinet are no longer under the house arrest imposed by the Houthis.

"The Security Council urges non-State actors to withdraw from Government institutions, including in the south of Yemen, and to refrain from any attempt to take over such institutions.

"The Security Council condemns in the strongest terms the air strikes against the presidential palace in Aden and attacks at Aden international airport. The Security Council condemns in the strongest terms the horrific 20 March bomb attacks at the two mosques in Sana'a and in Sa'dah, Yemen, which killed at least 126 and injured many more. The Security Council urges all sides to refrain from any further use of military force, any offensive military actions and other uses of violence.

"The Security Council reiterates its call urging all parties to agree upon and announce publicly dates for completing the constitutional consultation process, to hold a referendum on the constitution, and to conduct elections under the new electoral law pursuant to the new constitution and in this regard demands that the parties take all actions conducive to this process, including by the full implementation of resolution 2201 (2015).

"The Security Council reiterates its concern at the ability of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula to benefit from the deterioration of the political and security situation in Yemen, mindful that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivation, whenever, wherever and by whomsoever committed.

"The Security Council reiterates that the solution to the situation in Yemen is through a peaceful, inclusive, orderly and Yemeni-led political transition process that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people for peaceful change and meaningful political, economic and social reform, as set out in the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, the Peace and

National Partnership Agreement and its security annex.

"The Security Council strongly calls upon all parties, in particular the Houthis, to abide by the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement and its security annex and the relevant Security Council resolutions and to accelerate inclusive United Nations-brokered negotiations, including on issues relating to governance, to continue the political transition in order to reach a consensus solution and stresses the importance of full implementation of agreements reached and commitments made towards that goal.

"The Security Council emphasizes its call for all parties in Yemen, including the Houthis, Government officials, leaders of political parties and movements, and members of so-called popular committees, to adhere to resolving their differences through dialogue and consultation, reject acts of violence to achieve political goals, and refrain from provocation and all unilateral actions to undermine the political transition. The Security Council stresses that all parties should take concrete steps to agree and implement a consensus-based political solution to Yemen's crisis in accordance with the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement and its security annex.

"The Security Council welcomes the intention of the President of Yemen, Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, to engage in good faith in the United Nations-brokered negotiations.

"The Security Council welcomes the intention of the Gulf Cooperation Council to convene a conference in Riyadh, upon the request of the President of Yemen, with the participation of all Yemeni parties to further support the political transition in Yemen, and to complement and support the United Nations-brokered negotiations.

"The Security Council reiterates the importance of all parties allowing all Yemenis to assemble peacefully without fear of attack, injury, arrest, or retaliation.

"The Security Council calls on all parties to comply with their obligations under international law, including applicable international humanitarian law and human rights law.

"The Security Council reiterates its demand that all parties in Yemen cease all armed hostilities against the people and the legitimate authorities of Yemen and relinquish the arms seized from Yemen's military and security institutions, in accordance with the Peace and National Partnership Agreement and its security annex.

"The Security Council also urges all parties to facilitate safe and unhindered access for humanitarian actors to reach people in need of humanitarian assistance. It also reaffirms the need for all parties to ensure the safety of civilians, including those receiving assistance as well as the need to ensure the security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel.

"The Security Council notes with appreciation the work of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, Jamal Benomar, and stresses the importance of the United Nations close coordination with international partners, including the Gulf Cooperation Council, Group of Ambassadors in Sana'a, and other actors, in order to contribute to the successful transition.

"The Security Council calls on all Member States to refrain from external interference which seeks to fomem conflict and instability and instead to support the political transition.

"The Security Council demands that all parties fully implement all Council resolutions on Yemen, including resolution 2201 (2015).

"The Security Council reaffirms its readiness to take further measures against any party in case of non-implementation of its resolutions on Yemen, in particular its resolution 2201 (2015)."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2015/8.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7412

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7412th meeting

Tuesday, 24 March 2015, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Non-proliferation

Briefing by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation

Briefing by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006)

The President (*spoke in English*): At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Ambassador Mr. Roman Oyarzun Marchesi, Permanent Representative of Spain, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006).

I now give the floor to Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to present the report of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) in accordance with paragraph 18 (b) of the same resolution. The present report covers the period from 18 December 2014 to 23 March 2015, during which time the Committee held one informal meeting, on 4 February, and conducted additional work using the no-objection procedure envisioned by paragraph 15 of the guidelines for the conduct of its work.

In view of the recent developments relating to the Joint Plan of Action, the Committee welcomes the commitment of all parties to pursuing negotiations towards a comprehensive agreement.

I would like to emphasize that the measures imposed by the Security Council through resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008) and 1929 (2010) remain in full effect as negotiations between the P5+1 and the Islamic Republic of Iran continue, and that Member States remain obliged to duly implement them. The Committee remains fully committed to the implementation of all relevant resolutions and stands ready to provide guidance to Member States that request assistance.

In that respect, while no new incidents have been reported to the Committee during the current reporting period, I would recall that the Committee reached out to the Islamic Republic of Iran for comment on several occasions in relation to incidents investigated by the Panel of Experts. The Islamic Republic of Iran has not yet provided a response and the Committee continues to call on Iran to do so.

The Committee continues to assist States and international organizations in implementing the relevant Security Council measures and has finalized its deliberations on a number of such requests. This includes considering requests for guidance covering a range of issues, including whether proposals for technical assistance to the Islamic Republic of Iran in the fields of energy efficiency, refuelling services for aircrafts, and mine action, as well as other cooperation proposals, are permitted by the sanctions measures. The Committee welcomes such collaboration on matters of implementation and compliance, and encourages parties to continue to seek guidance from the Committee on the application of the Council's measures.

The Committee also received two notifications from Member States in accordance with the relevant resolutions. Paragraph 15 of resolution 1737 (2006) and paragraph 4 of resolution 1747 (2007) allow for payments owed by a designated entity under a contract entered into force prior to its designation to be made from that entity's frozen funds, subject to prior notification to the Committee. The Committee received such a notification from a Member State in accordance with paragraph 15 of resolution 1737 (2006) and paragraph 4 of resolution 1747 (2007). Similarly, a Member State notified the Committee of its delivery of equipment intended for use in a light-water reactor to the Bushehr nuclear power plant, in accordance with paragraph 5 of resolution 1737 (2006).

In view of actions taken by Member States to implement the relevant Security Council measures, the Committee encourages States that have not yet submitted reports to do so as soon as possible in recognition that national implementation reports are an important means of promoting the implementation of the sanctions measures.

In connection with the Panel of Experts, I am pleased to report that the Committee concluded its consideration of the recommendations contained in the 2014 final report of the Panel of Experts (S/2014/394) on 31 December 2014, in particular in view of any follow-up action by the Committee. The Committee took note of the recommendations and finalized its deliberations on additional information regarding designated individuals, in particular bio-identifiers, in the Committee's sanctions list. All updates have

been made available on the Committee website. The Committee decided that, in the event of a comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, it would revert at the appropriate time to the Panel's recommendation to provide specific guidance to Member States on possible implications for the relevant Security Council measures, once an outcome was known.

The Committee received an informal briefing of the Panel's investigative and outreach activities during its informal consultations on 4 February. As to the activities undertaken by the Panel over the past three months, I note that the Panel has participated in a number of events that are listed in the annex to the report, which has been distributed in the Chamber.

Finally, while recalling that the primary responsibility for implementing the provisions of resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008) and 1929 (2010) rests with Member States, the Committee stands ready to facilitate the implementation of these measures.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi, Permanent Representative of Spain, for his briefing and for his efforts to promote the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) since the beginning of his chairmanship.

China has always attached great importance to and actively participated in the work of the Committee and hopes that, together with the other members of the Committee, we shall continue our good work in a steady, practical and balanced manner. China believes that sanctions in and of themselves are not the purpose of the relevant Council resolution, and that the tightening of sanctions is not the appropriate criterion by which to assess the Committee's work.

The Iranian nuclear talks currently face a precious historic opportunity. Although the negotiations face many difficulties, the entire international community hopes to see a comprehensive agreement reached by the deadline. This would represent a positive trend and serve the common and long-term interests of all parties. The Committee and the Panel of Experts should therefore discharge their duties in a steady and orderly way, contribute to international efforts to negotiate a solution to this issue, and refrain from any move contrary to the spirit of the resolution that may disrupt the negotiating process. China notes that the Panel is drafting its final report for the current term. We hope that the Panel will act in accordance with the aforementioned principles and work objectively and impartially to produce a good report.

Resolving the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomatic negotiations will safeguard the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, contribute to peace and tranquillity in the Middle East, and offer beneficial experience in negotiating solutions to major hot-spot issues. It is therefore of far-reaching significance. On the other hand, the potential impact of the talks far exceeds the talks themselves, and some twists, turns and difficulties in the process are unavoidable.

The six parties and Iran recently held intensive consultations and negotiations with a view to meeting the final deadline for the negotiations. The process is now in the final stage of the marathon, and China believes that the negotiations are near the finish line. We hope that the parties will seize this important window of opportunity to strengthen their political will, mobilize favourable factors, continue working to meet each other half way, and make timely political decisions so as to run the last and most difficult kilometre side by side in order, as soon as possible, to reach a comprehensive agreement that is equitable, balanced and mutually beneficial. The parties should persevere, see the process through to the very end, and prevent last-minute failures.

China supports the ongoing positive role being played by the International Atomic Energy Agency in resolving this issue. We hope that the Agency will strengthen its cooperation with Iran and gradually resolve the relevant pending issues. China is a responsible party to the talks, has consistently behaved in an objective and impartial way, and has made positive contributions to resolving the difficult key issues in the negotiations. China will pursue its constructive participation in the negotiations and, alongside the other parties, finish the marathon talks on the Iranian nuclear issue as soon as possible, so as to contribute its wisdom and strength to achieving a comprehensive, thorough and long-term solution to this issue.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to thank the Permanent Representative of Spain for his interesting statement and for all his

efforts in leading the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). I also thank the Panel of Experts for their work in preparing the relevant reports.

Jordan is deeply committed to respecting the right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes; that is particularly so for developing countries attempting to promote economic growth. These efforts must be part and parcel of full and complete cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and in accordance with the releveant legal instruments, the Charter of the United Nations and international law, while consistently taking into account the nature and quality of security and safety measures applicable to nuclear installations.

Given the emerging possibility of Iran and the P5+1 achieving an agreement on the political framework and main elements of a comprehensive agreement on the Iranian nuclear issue in the near future, Jordan, alongside the rest of the international community, is eager to receive details of the agreement and implementation measures. If a comprehensive agreement is reached on the Iranian nuclear issue, pursuant to the paramaters set out by the IAEA for the peaceful production of nuclear energy, it would represent a first step in the right direction that we should seize upon to strengthen regional security. We hope that such an agreement will bolster the efforts of the international community to address all the challenges facing the Middle East, in particular in the field of security, and that it will not detract from our consideration of all other dossiers in the Arab region.

Moreover, we reiterate the need for the Committee to continue to fully meet its responsibilities to pursue the necessary investigations of violations that have been committed and to maintain a positive commitment, alongside the Iranian authorities, to clarifying all outstanding issues related to past violations. We invite the Iranian Government to respond to the Panel of Experts's requests for clarification in that respect. Along the same lines, we encourage States that have not yet submitted their reports on the measures taken towards the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions to do so. We also call upon them to fully cooperate with the Panel of Experts, as the success of the Committee very much depends on those States submitting their reports.

In conclusion, we would like to pay tribute to the role of the Committee, which assists Member States and international bodies in implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions by considering requests from Member States concerning Iran's requests for technical assistance with regard to the provision of energy and aircraft services. We encourage such assistance, as it enables Member States to ensure that they act in conformity with the resolutions of the Security Council.

Mrs. Schwalger (New Zealand): We thank Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi for his briefing in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). New Zealand fully supports the mandate of the Committee.

New Zealand joins others in acknowledging the efforts of the P5+1 and Iran in their current negotiations on a comprehensive agreement. New Zealand fully supports that process and hopes that negotiations will be concluded by the agreed deadline. We appreciate the fact that the negotiations are sensitive for the key parties involved, but we trust that those sensitivities will not stand in the way of a comprehensive outcome.

New Zealand was encouraged by the briefing to the Security Council provided several weeks ago by the High Representative of the European Union, Federica Mogherini, in which she noted that the parties had

> "never been so close to what could be a turning point in the history of Iran's relationship with the West and with the region" (*S/PV.7402, p. 7*).

New Zealand trusts that hope will be realized. For now, however, it is important to remember that the existing sanctions remain in place and that, as the 90-day report notes, States have an obligation to duly implement them.

New Zealand is aware of the challenges involved in implementing complex sanctions regimes such as the one set out in resolution 1737 (2006), particularly for small States. At the conclusion of the P5+1 talks with Iran, there will be a need for clear communication with Member States on the implications for the existing sanctions regime. We look forward to working constructively as a member of the Committee to provide guidance to Member States at the appropriate time.

Finally, we take the opportunity afforded by today's briefing to encourage all parties involved in the talks to sustain the commitment and the political will required for a positive outcome.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank Ambassador Oyarzun

Marchesi, Permanent Representative of Spain, for the briefing on the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), which he chairs, for the period under review. I would also like to thank the Spanish delegation for the skilled leadership of that subsidiary body of the Council at this highly sensitive stage. We look forward to further practical and constructive cooperation in the Committee to swiftly settle the situation concerning the Iranian nuclear programme.

On 20 March in Lausanne, the most recent full round of talks of the sextet of international mediators with Iranian representatives was held in order to work out a final agreement on a comprehensive settlement of the situation related to the Iranian nuclear programme. The parties continued to seek compromise with regard to solutions to the remaining unsolved issues. It was agreed that the next round of talks would begin on 26 March. In that regard, we would like to note that it is extremely important for all the parties to ensure progress in moving towards a final agreement. It is necessary to produce a document that includes all of the basic principles, for which the parameters for implementation will then be the subject of technical consultations and planning work. We cannot let this opportunity slip away.

Of course, the reaching of a settlement and the implementation of the expected agreements will be linked to a thorough review of the sanctions regime currently in force. A discussion of the specific parameters is currently being carried out in the format of the P5+1 and Iran. Another aspect of this issue is also important: several Members of the United Nations, guided by a misguided interpretation of the sanctions agreed in the Security Council, are introducing additional unilateral restrictions and limitations outside of the Council, which have no international legal basis to support them. We reaffirm our rejection of such a practice.

For our part, we will continue to do everything in our power to definitively and comprehensively bring to a close the issues related to the Iranian nuclear programme, and to relieve Tehran of the sanctions introduced by the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): I thank the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) and the Panel of Experts for their continued work in supporting implementation of the Security Council's resolutions on Iran. I particularly welcome Spain's leadership on this sensitive issue.

We have made progress in recent weeks in the negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme. However, a lot of complex issues remain unresolved. We remain committed to finding a comprehensive agreement, and still believe that is possible. But we will not agree to a bad deal. Iran will need to show greater flexibility and take some tough decisions in the coming days if we are to achieve a deal when talks resume in Switzerland later this week.

We are at an important moment in the negotiations. If we are able to resolve the main issues, technical work will follow to convert a political framework into a detailed text. We will continue to work together with our E3+3 partners to ensure a successful outcome. We welcome the unity of purpose shown by our fellow Council members involved in the negotiations, and recognize the important role played by the High Representative of the European Union in the talks.

While negotiations continue, the bulk of sanctions, including all United Nations sanctions, and the obligations on Member States arising from Security Council resolutions, remain in place and fully in force. We therefore welcome the notifications from Member States regarding designated entities and the delivery of equipment intended for use in a light-water reactor at the Bushehr nuclear power plant. That report reminds us that we must continue to report any violations in accordance with the requirements set out in the resolutions.

Turning to the work of the Committee, we must continue implementation work to enforce the relevant Security Council sanctions measures on Iran. We welcome the Committee's continued guidance and assistance to Member States and to international organizations.

We remain concerned by Iran's continued failure to respond to previous requests for information on various incidents, including the interdiction of a vessel carrying a cargo of conventional arms in the Red Sea. Once again, we urge Iran to engage with the Committee on such incidents.

On the work of the Panel of Experts, we welcome the range of activities carried out in 2014, and in particularly the recommendations set out in the 2014

final report (see S/2014/932) regarding designated individuals, as well as on biodentifiers and the updated sanctions list.

The United Kingdom remains committed to finding a peaceful and lasting negotiated solution to the Iran nuclear issue, and will continue to work closely with our E3+3 partners to achieve that goal.

Mr. Pressman (United States): I would like to thank the Ambassador of Spain for his briefing. We also thank Spain for its leadership of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) in carrying forward its important work.

The Committee's work has been an integral element of our broader diplomacy. It has helped countries to implement the four rounds of robust United Nations sanctions. With the support of its Panel of Experts, the Committee has investigated sanctions violations and assembled an important and impressive understanding of Iran's proliferation networks. It has also helped crack down on Iran's arms smuggling, stemming the flow of weapons in a volatile region. Through its active engagement, the Committee has directly supported ongoing efforts to address international concerns about Iran's nuclear programme. As we are all well aware, for more than a year, the P5+1 countries have been engaged in a serious dialogue with Iran. Secretary Kerry and our negotiating team met last week in Switzerland with the P5+1 and their Iranian counterparts. Those discussions have identified serious and difficult issues.

As President Obama and Secretary Kerry have made clear, we are working to see if we can arrive at a political framework by the end of March that addresses the major elements of a comprehensive deal. But let us be clear — the only reason we are engaging in those negotiations is to deny Iran a nuclear weapon. There are still significant gaps and important choices that need to be made in the negotiations. As we have said many times, no deal is better than a bad deal. The negotiations must find ways to advance our goal of ensuring that Iran does not now, or ever, acquire a nuclear weapon, and that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful.

The Committee must continue its essential work monitoring and improving the enforcement of existing sanctions. Similarly, the Panel of Experts must continue its vital work, investigating violations and following up on leads and clarifying sanctions obligations to Member States. Member States must also continue reporting to the Committee attempted illicit procurement activities in their territories in violation of therelevant Security Council resolutions on Iran. The pace and intensity of the Committee's work is critical and must continue. After all, responding effectively to violations is at the core of the Committee's mandate. Any breach of the sanctions is a serious matter, violates international law and undermines the Security Council's credibility. The Committee's outreach work — advising Member States, answering questions and ensuring that Member States are well positioned to ensure the full and robust implementation of the sanctions — is of great importance.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Ambassador Román Oyarzun Marchesi for introducing the 90-day report of the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). We appreciate Spain's approach in presiding over the Security Council's non-proliferation committees, through which it has shown decisiveness and political tact.

As noted by Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi in his briefing, the sanctions imposed by the Security Council under resolution 1737 (2006) and the other relevant resolutions remain in full effect during the course of the current negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran. However, sanctions are not an end in themselves, but are merely a tool used within a broader diplomatic strategy aimed at restoring the trust between the international community and Iran with regard to the country's the nuclear programme.

It is essential to maintain the positive atmosphere that has prevailed throughout the negotiations. Council members must contribute to this cause, as it is in everyone's interest to achieve a broad and substantive agreement that allows Iran to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and the international community to verify that the programme is not for military purposes.

Chile takes note of the 19 February report of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We appreciate the support provided by the IAEA to the activities of monitoring and verifying the voluntary measures referred to in the Joint Plan of Action.

Finally, we thank the Panel of Experts for the work it is doing, which is vital to the functioning of the 1737 Committee.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank

you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), the report of which was presented by Ambassador Roman Oyarzun Marchesi in his capacity as Chair of that subsidiary body. We would like to extend our appreciation and recognition to Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi for the work he is doing. We would also like to extend our condolences with regard to today's plane crash, which has affected dozens of Spanish citizens.

Venezuela welcomes the progress that has been achieved with regard to the Joint Plan of Action and the negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran, as well as the commitment of all the parties to continuing the round of negotiations aimed at achieving a broad and final agreement. We encourage all the parties to seize this historic opportunity to set their differences aside and resolve the Iranian nuclear issue in a diplomatic and peaceful manner by reaching a long-term comprehensive solution by consensus.

We are pleased to see that the cooperation between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency has continued, as noted in the Agency's laterst report. Venezuela reaffirms the sovereign right of the Islamic Republic of Iran and other developing countries to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

We believe that the most important task in the next stage of negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran is to build on the positive momentum and to not give way to the provocations of other actors and extremist views, but rather to concentrate instead on trying to resolve the differences on the basis of dialogue and negotiations that will lead to the lifting once and for all of the sanctions regime imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran. We also welcome the fact that the Committee's report indicates that there were no new incidents reported during the period under consideration.

We hope that the diplomatic efforts undertaken in other forums with regard to the implementation of the safeguards related to the Iranian nuclear issue will have a positive effect on the Committee's work. Venezuela attaches great importance to the efforts undertaken by the international community in favour of disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We affirm our full support for the strengthening of the international system applicable to these areas through compliance with the obligations under those legal binding instruments. We support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as exists in Latin America, in accordance with the decisions adopted with regard to the indefinite renewal of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In that regard, we call upon the Security Council to make efforts to ensure that all the countries of the region adhere to that legal instrument.

For my country, weapons of mass destruction constitute a threat to international peace and security and, therefore, their elimination is a priority issue for humankind.

Mr. Baublys (Lithuania): I wish to thank Ambassador Roman Oyarzun Marchesi for his first report to the Council in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). We are confident that the Committee will benefit from his able guidance during this decisive stage of its work.

Lithuania closely follows the intensive diplomatic efforts by the E3+3 and Iran to find a comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The negotiations have now entered a crucial stage, and we hope that the momentum we saw developing in the past few weeks will facilitate an agreement within the time frame set in November 2014.

We reiterate that only Iran's willingness to provide verifiable guarantees to the international community on the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme can lead to a successful outcome of the process. That will require flexibility and openness by Iran in bridging the remaining gaps. For its part, the European Union has shown significant goodwill in extending the sanctions relief measures with regard to Iranian crude oil, petrochemical products, gold and precious metals, as well as increasing the thresholds for financial transfers to and from Iran.

Iran's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is another vital element in rebuilding the international's community's trust. We welcome the IAEA's conclusion that Iran has been implementing its commitments under the Joint Plan of Action. At the same time, we remain very concerned that cooperation with the Agency under the Framework for Cooperation appears to have stalled. Iran has yet to provide explanations that could enable the Agency to clarify the two practical measures outstanding, and has not proposed further practical measures, despite

the Agency's repeated requests. We urge Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA on all the outstanding issues, including those related to the possible military dimensions of its nuclear programme, in order to enable the Agency to provide credible assurances of the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran.

Turning to the work of the Committee, Lithuania wishes to reaffirm that the Joint Plan of Action does not affect in any way the sanctions measures imposed by the relevant Security Council resolutions. All Council sanctions imposed on Iran therefore remain in full effect, and all Member States have an obligation to implement them. The obligation to cooperate fully also extends to Iran, and we encourage it to engage with the Committee to help facilitate the Committee's investigations. The work of the Committee's Panel of Experts in verifying compliance also remains unaffected. In that regard, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Panel of Experts for its work. Lithuania looks forward to the release of the Panel's final report and to subsequent discussions in the Committee.

Finally, I would like to reiterate Lithuania's hope that the talks between the E3+3 and Iran will shortly lead to a comprehensive and verifiable solution that will strengthen international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme for the long term.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Spain and Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) for his briefing and for his astute leadership of the Committee.

Nigeria notes that no new incidents were reported to the Committee in the period covered by the report. We commend the Committee for its continued assistance to States and international organizations in implementing the relevant Security Council measures under the 1737 sanctions. Indeed, that aspect of its work remains crucial to maintaining the integrity of the decisions taken by the Council and ensuring that States do not unknowingly violate the 1737 sanctions regime. We encourage States to seek the Committee's guidance on proposals for technical cooperation with Iran in matters that fall within the Committee's purview.

Nigeria is concerned about the fact that Iran has not responded to the Committee's requests about two incidents investigated by the Committee's Panel of Experts. We urge the Iranian authorities to facilitate the Committee's work by responding to those requests without delay. We commend the Panel of Experts for its efforts, which have made a significant contribution to the Committee's work. We note that the Committee has concluded its consideration of the recommendations, as reflected in the final report of the Panel of Experts.

Nigeria has been following with keen interest the ongoing negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran on finding a comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We support the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We urge the Iranian authorities to continue to negotiate in good faith with a view to assuring the international community of their peaceful intentions for their nuclear programme. We look forward to the successful outcome of the negotiations, as well as to receiving guidance from the Committee on the possible implications for the relevant Security Council measures in the event that the parties reach an agreement.

Mrs. Adnin (Malaysia): We would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Spain for his briefing on the work of the Security Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) during the reporting period, as well as for his stewardship of the Committee.

Malaysia is of the view that all States must adhere to the fundamental principles concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In order to ensure that those principles are not abused, States must exhibit full transparency in their nuclear programmes, subject those programmes to the full scope of the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), comply with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and gain the international community's confidence and trust in the peaceful nature of their nuclear programmes. In that regard, Malaysia welcomes the progress in the negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran regarding the Joint Plan of Action. We recognize the complexity of the discussions and the contentious issues involved. We also commend the serious and sustained commitment of the parties concerned to moving the process forward.

Malaysia hopes that all sides will be able to show flexibility so that the negotiations can culminate in a positive outcome. We look forward to a comprehensive agreement on the basis of realistic and achievable goals that meet the core requirements of all parties, particularly reaching a political agreement by the end of March and completing the technical annexes

by the 30 June deadline. Malaysia also acknowledges the measures Iran has taken to build the international community's confidence through its cooperation with the IAEA. We note that it remains engaged in dialogue with the IAEA and has continued to provide access to its facilities, allowing the Agency to conduct its verification work under the Joint Programme of Action.

Against that backdrop, the 1737 Committee has continued to conduct its work in accordance with its mandate, as we heard in the Chair's briefing on its recent activities. Given that the P5+1 negotiations with Iran are still under way, we share the view that the Committee should remain committed to implementing all the relevant Security Council resolutions. Accordingly, it should continue its important role of assisting the Member States and international organizations that seek its guidance. We trust that it will continue its work on implementation and compliance with a prudent and judicious approach, based on the mandate derived from the relevant resolutions.

At the same time, we are seeing heightened levels of anticipation, and perhaps a certain degree of uncertainty, among Member States and the private sector regarding the ongoing negotiations between Iran and the P5+1. There is clearly strong interest on the part of various stakeholders in the immediate implications of the Council's sanctions on Iran, depending on the outcome of the talks. Looking ahead, we expect there will be a pressing demand for more clarity on the matter in the coming weeks. We recognize the need for greater outreach concerning the continuing validity of the Council's measures on Iran. At the same time, we also feel that the Committee is reaching a stage where it will narrow its focus in order to deal with a potential political agreement as an outcome to the discussions between the P5+1 and Iran. Malaysia looks forward to working constructively within the framework of the Committee on that important process.

I would also like to take this opportunity to briefly touch on the work of the Panel of Experts. We are pleased that the Panel is now back at work with a full complement of experts, and we hope that will be useful, given the expectations that lie ahead. We note that the deadline for the submission of the Panel's final report will come a few weeks after the P5+1 and Iran are expected to conclude their talks on a political agreement. Given that, we hope the Panel will intensify its work on the final report in the weeks to come by focusing on producing a fact-based assessment and analysis that takes into consideration the implications of the outcome of the talks. Since the Panel's mandate will expire in July, we also believe that at the appropriate juncture the Committee should consider how to approach the renewal of its mandate in the event of a comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue.

Malaysia, like other Committee members, and indeed the rest of the international community, looks forward to positive developments in the P5+1 negotiations with Iran on its nuclear programme. We anticipate that Member States will soon be referring to the 1737 Committee for guidance on the implementation of the relevant resolutions, based on the outcome of the talks. In that regard, I wish to conclude by underscoring our confidence that the Committee will be able to respond expeditiously and decisively to such scenarios.

Mr. Gombo (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), Ambassador Roman Oyarzun Marchesi, for the 90-day report that covers the period from 18 December 2014 to 23 March 2015 on the activities of the Committee. Chad takes note of the report and encourages the Committee to continue its activities.

Concerning the Iranian nuclear issue, we welcome the talks between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the States members of the P5+1 on the basis of the Joint Plan of Action. We note with regret that previous negotiations did not end in a definitive agreement. Nevertheless, we support the negotiations and call for all parties to be reasonable and come to a political solution as soon as possible. Chad is a peace-loving country and hopes that the diplomatic and political negotiations will achieve a definitive solution. We hope that the bilateral negotiations to be held in Lausanne, Switzerland, through 31 March will finally enable a solid agreement to be reached.

Chad recognizes the Islamic Republic of Iran's right to develop a civilian nuclear programme, and once an agreement has been concluded, the sanctions should be lifted. The Islamic Republic of Iran insists that its nuclear activities are peaceful. In addition, it maintains that it is not engaged in a nuclear arms race because, according to Iran, such weapons are contrary to its way of life and its philosophy.

To conclude, I would like to congratulate Mr. Roman Oyarzun Marchesi for his leadership of the 1737 Committee and to wish him good luck over the next two

years. I also hope for full success in the negotiations under way for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue with a view to lifting sanctions.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We thank Ambassador Roman Oyarzun Marchesi for presenting the quarterly report of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). We congratulate the Spanish delegation and the Panel of Experts on the work done thus far.

We are pleased that no incidents have been reported over the past three months concerning the implementation of resolution 1737 (2006), and we sincerely hope that there will be no setbacks in the effective implementation of all relevant resolutions. We welcome the joint statement of the P5+1 foreign ministers, in which they agreed that substantial progress had been made with Iran on key areas of the Joint Plan of Action, and welcome the commitment of all parties to continuing negotiations towards finding a comprehensive agreement. We therefore hope that all parties agree on the remaining outstanding issues of the broad technical framework for Iran's nuclear programme by the deadline of the end of March.

It is undeniable that the sanctions are having a negative effect on Iran's economy and its people, and we hope that a deal can be reached soon in order to lift some of those crippling sanctions. Although Iran has evolved its commitment to reach an agreement on a comprehensive solution, the sanctions regime is still in force and must be respected, as must the Committee's commitment to its implementation. We therefore encourage the Iranian Government to engage with the Committee and respond to the Committee's requests, which have thus far received no answers.

Angola fully supports the non-proliferation nuclear arms regime, and we condemn any activities aiming at the development of nuclear weapons. We will continue to support the ongoing negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran, and we are hopeful that both sides can come to an agreement by the deadlines that have been set. We fully recognize Iran's right to develop a nuclear energy programme strictly for peaceful aims, medical research and energy production purposes and that there will be no pursuit of nuclear weapons capabilities, which could have serious repercussions for the Middle East and pose a serious threat to international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of France.

I thank the Ambassador of Spain for the briefing he has just given us on the quarterly activities of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) on sanctions against Iran. As this is his first briefing as Chair of the Committee to the Security Council, I wish to congratulate him for the speed and the seriousness with which he took charge of that Committee, which deals with a very sensitive issue, and wish him and his team my best wishes for success.

Since the adoption of the Joint Plan of Action in November 2013, which was extended a year later, the E3+3 and Iran entered intensive discussions aimed at achieving, before the end of June 2015, a comprehensive agreement that would establish the exclusively peaceful purpose of Iran's nuclear programme. The negotiations between the six countries and Iran are now in a decisive phase. Our position has been consistent throughout the discussions. Iran has every right to develop energy nuclear for civilian purposes, but under no circumstances should it have access to nuclear weapons. All our demands during the negotiations are based on that principle. It is a simple position based on our rejection of nuclear proliferation.

In past weeks, the discussions between the six and Iran enabled progress to be made, but such progress remains, to date, insufficient. Despite the many proposals by the E3+3, differences with Iran remain, in particular on research and development and the settlement of the question of sanctions. Iran must now make tough choices if it truly wants to restore the confidence of the international community. With our partners in the group of six, we are determined to reach a good agreement, that is to say a robust and solid agreement that would establish and guarantee in the long term the exclusively peaceful purpose of Iran's nuclear programme.

Cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is, in this respect, an essential part of the resolution of the proliferation crisis with Iran. The IAEA has confirmed a few days ago that Iran is respecting, at this stage, its obligations related to the Joint Plan of Action of November 2013. However, the most recent report of the IAEA General Director on the implementation of safeguards in Iran states that, with respect to the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme, cooperation with Iran is at a standstill, having not seen any progress since August 2014. The IAEA Director General confirmed that yesterday in Washington, D. C.

Therefore, Iran has not proposed new practical measures, and, with respect to the existing approved measures in the framework of cooperation of May 2014, Iran has given no explanation for the initiation of high explosives and neutron transport calculations. That situation is of concern. The resolution of all issues related to the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme is a key element for restoring confidence and therefore for the long-term agreement that we all want.

Finally, the Chair's report rightly points out that the measures contained in the Security Council's resolutions regarding Iran remain in full force pending a comprehensive settlement of the Iranian proliferation crisis and of any changes that the Security Council may decide on. Until then, the Sanctions Committee should continue to fulfil its responsibilities, and I thank the Panel of Experts for continuing to support it in that task.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7413

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7413th meeting

Tuesday, 24 March 2015, 4.05 p.m.

New York

President	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	Jordan	Mr. Al-Mouhtaseb
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Agasandyan
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

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The meeting was called to order at 4.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of South Sudan to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

After consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council underscores the seriousness and urgency of the situation in South Sudan, as demonstrated by its 3 March 2015 unanimous adoption of resolution 2206 (2015) establishing a United Nations sanctions regime for those undermining the peace, security or stability of South Sudan, with initial dates for the Council's review of 5 March 2015 and 1 April 2015, and demanding that the parties commit to finding a comprehensive agreement and calling upon all parties to armed conflict in South Sudan to issue clear orders prohibiting all violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses without further delay.

"In that regard, the Security Council expresses its profound disappointment that President Salva Kiir, former Vice-President Riek Machar and all parties have failed to conclude an agreement on the transitional arrangements outlined in the 1 February 2014 Areas of Agreement on the Establishment of the Transitional Government of National Unity in the Republic of South Sudan signed by the Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition by the 5 March 2015 deadline set by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). In this context, the Security Council reiterates its willingness to impose sanctions against those who threaten the peace, security or stability of South Sudan.

"The Security Council reiterates its strong condemnation of the repeated violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement accepted and signed by the Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition on 23 January 2014, and emphasizes that the actions of President Salva Kiir and former Vice-President Riek Machar in continuing to pursue a military solution to this conflict are in breach of their obligations under that Agreement.

"The Security Council commends IGAD, as supported by the United Nations and African Union, for its relentless work in establishing a forum for political and security dialogue, establishing and operationalizing the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism for the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and leading multi-stakeholder political negotiations to establish a Transitional Government of National Unity.

"The Security Council takes note of the 6 March 2015 message from Ethiopia's Prime Minister and Chairman of IGAD Hailemariam Dessalegn to the people of South Sudan explaining why the peace talks did not produce the necessary breakthrough.

"The Security Council welcomes IGAD's intention, joined by the friends of South Sudan from Africa and abroad, including the United Nations, to implement a common plan and to table a reasonable and comprehensive solution to end the crisis in South Sudan and urges all parties to engage meaningfully in the peace process so to bring about a political resolution of the crisis and an end to the violence.

"The Security Council reiterates its intent to impose any sanctions that may be appropriate to respond to the situation, which may include an arms embargo and the designation of senior individuals responsible for actions or policies that threaten the peace, security or stability of South Sudan, so as to encourage the Government of South Sudan and opposition forces to form a Transitional Government of National Unity, take effective and comprehensive steps to cause forces under direct or indirect control to cease military operations, acts of violence, as well as violations of human rights, and enable full access for humanitarian assistance.

"The Security Council renews its deep appreciation for the courageous actions taken and ongoing by the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) personnel

and troop- and police-contributing countries for the protection of civilians and the stabilization of the security situation, and reiterates its support to UNMISS.

"The Security Council reaffirms its deep concern that the conflict has resulted in great human suffering, including significant loss of life, displacement of 2 million people, and the loss of property, further impoverishing and disadvantaging the people of South Sudan.

"The Security Council further underscores the significant importance of fighting impunity and ensuring accountability for serious violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in South Sudan, including those that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

"The Security Council renews its calls for parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate, in accordance with relevant provisions of international law and United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance, the full, safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel, equipment and supplies to all those in need and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance.

"The Security Council recognizes the work of the African Union Commission of Inquiry for South Sudan in investigating and documenting violations as well as abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, anticipates with interest its findings and recommendations, encourages the public release of the final report as soon as possible, and welcomes the further engagement of the African Union to ensure justice and accountability, as well as healing and reconciliation.

"The Security Council looks forward to the rapid establishment of the Panel of Experts that will play a central role in assisting the South Sudan Sanctions Committee established under resolution 2206 (2015), including by providing it with information relevant to the potential designation of individuals and entities who may be engaging in the activities described in paragraphs 6 and 7 of resolution 2206 (2015).

"The Security Council reaffirms that it shall be prepared to adjust the measures contained in resolution 2206 (2015), including by strengthening through additional measures, as well as modification, suspension or lifting of the measures, as may be needed at any time in light of the progress achieved in the peace, accountability and reconciliation process, and in light of the implementation of the parties' commitments, including the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and other obligations specified in the preamble of the resolution, and compliance with it.

"The Security Council further reaffirms its support for the people of South Sudan, renews its steadfast commitment to the peace and security of South Sudan and the region, including through its full implementation of resolution 2206 (2015), and echoes the IGAD Chairman's 6 March 2015 statement that the world stands with the people and peace will be achieved."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2015/9.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Deng (South Sudan): I am pleased and honoured to address the Council under your stewardship, Sir, concerning the presidential statement on South Sudan that has just been adopted (S/PRST/2015/9).

We have spoken on this issue on so many occasions that there is no longer much to be said. We have always maintained that we appreciate that the measures taken by the Council emanate from the deep concern about the conditions of our country and people, in particular under the current crisis. However, at the outset let me express my delegation's disappointment that the Council continues to deliberate on important issues of peace and security in South Sudan without extensive consultations with the African region. This is not in line with the spirit of the cooperation framework between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council. Equally, although my delegation is courteously consulted sometimes on the draft Security Council resolutions or statements pertaining to South Sudan, our views are hardly ever reflected in the Council's final documents.

The Government of the Republic of South Sudan is committed to the peaceful solution of the conflict in our country. President Salva Kiir has emphatically made the point on numerous occasions, including in his

statement to the nation Wednesday, 18 March. In this respect, we commend the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for its relentless efforts in seeking peaceful settlement of crisis in South Sudan.

Indeed, my Government has been engaged in the peace talks in good faith and has accepted various proposals made by the mediators in all rounds of the talks, including the establishment of a transitional government of national unity. Due to his desire for inclusivity in IGAD peace talks, the President of the Republic allowed for the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, including faith-based groups, civil society organizations, youth, women and political parties, so as to ensure ownership and inclusivity of the peace process.

The Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO) under the leadership of Mr. Riek Machar, continues to shift positions and put unreasonable demands on the table, which has made it extremely difficult to reach consensus on contentious national issues. In the last round of peace talks, the rebels demanded two armies during the 30-month interim period followed by the amalgamation of forces, rather than their integration, as should be the case. They also demanded the position of First Vice-President and a 50/50 share in the formation of the Government. It is incomprehensible that a country can have two separate armies under two different commands. The Government proposed the integration of rebel forces into the national army — a practice that has been successfully tested in countries emerging from civil wars across the globe, in particular in Africa.

The SPLM-IO also demanded that the Government pay the debt incurred by the Opposition during its rebellion, introducing a new formula for wealth-sharing. Effectively, in other words, paying them for the weapons and ammunition that they used to kill innocent civilians in South Sudan. Again, the Government did not see any justification for these demands, except that they were meant to create obstacles to reaching an agreement within the time frame concluding 5 March, given by IGAD. Therefore, the moral equivalency implied in today's presidential statement — which expresses disappointment that both President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar have failed to conclude an agreement on the transitional arrangements, as was outlined in the 1 February 2015 statement — is not correct.

President Salva Kiir, in his recent public address to the nation, extended an olive branch of peace to the SPLM-IO and former detainees. The President called upon the SPLM-IO to accept the general amnesty the President offered and return to their units with their previous Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) ranks and ordered the Chief of General Staff to send directives to all SPLA units to receive the rebels and to provide them with necessary assistance. Furthermore, the President called upon the former detainees to come home and contribute to implementing the SPLM reunification agreement, which was signed on 21 January 2015 in Arusha, Tanzania.

As I have stated before the Council on other occasions, I strongly believe that sanctions rarely achieve their desired objectives but only encourage the hardening of positions towards confrontations. The international community can use more constructive and productive means of engaging the parties than sanctions. The Government is understandably disappointed by the plan to impose sanctions, rather than adopt measures that would encourage the parties to cooperate with the international community for peace. Sanctions at this critical juncture in the history of South Sudan will only devastate the economy and increase economic pressures on people who are already suffering and who are desperate.

Despite our differences, we are sincerely appreciative of the opportunity granted us by the Council to share our views and we remain hopeful that, from this exchange of views, common ground can emerge, divisive measure be avoided, and productive actions agreed upon.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.